



Daily Report

Central Eurasia

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Monday
6 January 1992

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FBIS-SOV-92-003

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6 January 1992

NOTICE TO READERS: An * indicates material not disseminated in electronic form.

NOTICE TO READERS: The "Central Eurasia DAILY REPORT" covers the same geographic area as the former "Soviet Union DAILY REPORT." The sections within have been reorganized. The "International Affairs" and the "Interregional Affairs" sections have been reduced, while the individual republic sections have been expanded. Much information previously found in the "International Affairs" and "Interregional Affairs" sections will be found under "Russia: International Affairs" or "Russia: Federation Affairs."

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Pentagon Budget Impact on SDI Advances Noted

PM0301142192 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA
in Russian 28 Dec 91 First Edition p 2

[G. Khromov article: "SDI: New Situation"]

[Text] In the opinion of a number of competent specialists, a new situation has taken shape around the SDI program with the adoption of the U.S. military budget for Fiscal 1992. What is its essence?

SDI has been sharply criticized in recent years. The particular tasks of this program have repeatedly been revised, and appropriations for its realization have been steadily cut. But SDI has now received a certain new boost, making it possible to keep it afloat. The sums allocated by the U.S. Congress (\$4.15 billion, which is 43 percent more than last year's level), although not as large as the Pentagon requested, still represent an opportunity for the latter to continue work on creating ABM systems within the framework of the newly appeared concept of "global protection against limited strikes by ballistic missiles"—GPALS.

This congressional support for the "star wars" program, as it quite often used to be called—support that is more considerable than last year—has taken shape not only on the wave of "ABM successes" during the war with Iraq and a heightened perception of the threat of ballistic missile strikes on the part of the Third World but also because of concern at the consequences of instability in the USSR. The latter factor has been promoted to a certain extent by unqualified and rash statements by some of our "experts" that a number of the states newly created on the territory of the former Union are interested in creating a GPALS system. At the same time it is obvious that the U.S. Administration has not received from Congress the go ahead to create the GPALS system in the form in which it was conceived. Instead of the ground-space system with global coverage proposed by the administration, a concept of limited ABM defense of U.S. territory, in which there must be no space strike means, has been advanced. It is permitted to carry out all work on such

means only within the framework of "technology research" (the request for space strike means—the so-called "brilliant pebbles"—has been cut in half to \$390 million, and it has been specially stipulated here that such means are wittingly excluded from ABM defense or, at any rate, from first-stage ABM defense).

But the chief point is probably that Congress has come out unequivocally in support of the 1972 Soviet-U.S. ABM Treaty: The program of work on the initial deployment (by 1996) of an ABM defense system can be fulfilled only strictly within the framework of this treaty. In other words, by analogy with our Moscow region, one region of ABM ground means (up to 100 launchers of antimissile missiles) can be deployed on U.S. territory.

In the opinion of Congress, the further buildup of ABM means, if this question reappears on the agenda, must be carried out only in agreement with the Soviet side. What is more, Congress has specially stipulated that even these indulgences, made when adopting the budget for Fiscal 1992, still certainly do not mean full approval for the decision to deploy an ABM system, albeit one that fits within the 1972 treaty.

An analysis of the discussion of problems of ABM defense in the U.S. Congress shows that its decisions in this sphere take account of the sentiments of the U.S. general public, which under contemporary conditions is less and less inclined to support the practice of giving a new twist to the arms race spiral.

Cost of Destroying Nuclear Weapons Noted

LD0301144592 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian
28 Dec 91 Union Edition p 1

[Untitled report from IZVESTIYA, TASS, RIA, REUTERS, AP, UPI roundup]

[Text] The destruction of stocks of nuclear weapons in our country will take at least 10 years and cost \$2 billion, reports Swedish radio, citing CIS and U.S. nuclear scientists.

NATO Supports Proposal To Admit CIS

*LD0601013192 Moscow TASS in English
2026 GMT 5 Jan 92*

[By TASS correspondent Nikolay Kalintsev]

[Text] Bonn January 5 TASS—Germany's allies by the NATO bloc support Bonn's proposal to admit to the NATO Council member republics of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). This initiative of Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher has met with broad support in the NATO circles, a spokesman for the German Foreign Ministry reported today. He said a session of the NATO permanent council would be held in Brussels next Tuesday under the chairmanship of NATO Secretary General Manfred Woerner. The session will discuss this problem.

The Foreign Ministry spokesman stressed that Genscher's proposal to hold shortly a special session of the NATO Council for the purpose of admitting CIS members also met with a positive response in NATO. It is supposed to be held next February after a meeting of foreign ministers of CSCE member states, which is scheduled for the end of January.

Presidents' Council of Olympic Committee Formed

*LD0401112692 Moscow TASS in English
0917 GMT 4 Jan 92*

[Text] Moscow January 4 TASS—Following their emergency meeting in Moscow on Friday [3 January], the heads of the national Olympic committees of Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia and Ukraine, the representative of Azerbaijan's Olympic movement and also chiefs of the Olympic Committee of the former Soviet Union decided to set up a council of the national Olympic committees' presidents, a public body, to operate in the transition period—until the national Olympic committees of the independent states are recognised by the International Olympic Committee.

The presidents' council is meant to facilitate an early recognition of the national Olympic committees of the independent states by the International Olympic Committee and coordinate work to prepare for and participate in the 1992 Olympic games.

Vitaliy Smirnov, vice president of the International Olympic Committee, was elected chairman of the presidents' council.

The council will begin fulfilling its duties after the International Olympic Committee recognises its representative functions.

Peace Corps Taking Volunteers for CIS Work

*PM0501220992 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian
2 Jan 92 Morning Edition p 4*

[Unattributed report: "Peace Corps' Sending Volunteers"]

[Text] A news conference has been held in Washington by the leadership of the "Peace Corps"—an organization of volunteers formed in the "cold war" years.

Journalists were informed that the recruitment of volunteers for work in the member states of the Commonwealth of Independent States will start in January of this year. It is intended that around 200 people will be working in the republics of the former Soviet Union by the end of 1992, and 500 by the end of 1993. Ukraine and Armenia have already sent the "Peace Corps" an official invitation to send them volunteers.

The "Peace Corps" leadership was informed that the former Union republics are most interested in specialists capable of assisting in the organization of private enterprises, teaching English, and resolving environmental problems, REUTER reports from Washington.

Palestinian Ambassador Cited on Peace Process

*LD0401173192 Moscow TASS in English
1706 GMT 4 Jan 92*

[by TASS diplomatic correspondent Sergey Postanogov]

[Text] Moscow January 4 TASS—Peace in the Middle East should be established on the basis of pertinent U.N. resolutions and international law. Palestinian ambassador to Moscow Nabil 'Amr said in a TASS interview today.

Palestinians agreed to hold talks with Israel on the land for peace principle and are prepared to welcome the Israeli leaders' initiatives aimed at bringing peace to the region, specifically the bids to terminate the construction of new settlements on the occupied Palestinian territories and the practice of deportations and mass reprisals.

'Amr expressed concern that the talks held in Washington highlighted several elements that may negatively affect peace efforts in the Middle East. This applies first and foremost to the Israeli leaders' decision to deport 12 Palestinians and also its continued practice to build new settlements in the Gaza Strip. 'Amr added that all these facts worsened the situation dramatically and could render talks ineffective irrespective of their venue.

'Amr voiced hope that the international community would pressure Israel into showing greater flexibility in issues of achieving peace in the Middle East. "The world community should give assistance in overcoming difficulties that arose on the path of bringing peace to the Middle Eastern region," 'Amr said.

Palestinian Envoy on CIS Role in Middle East

*PM0601103792 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA
in Russian 31 Dec 91 First Edition p 3*

[Interview with Said Abu Imar, Palestinian envoy in Moscow, by correspondent Lieutenant Colonel R. Mustafin; place and date not given: "We Hope To Preserve Friendship With You"—first paragraph is introduction]

[Text] What was the past year like for the peoples of the Near East, including the Palestinian people? What are their hopes for the coming year? Said Abu Imar, envoy [poslannik] extraordinary of the State of Palestine's embassy in Moscow, answers these questions put by KRASNAYA ZVEZDA correspondent Lieutenant Colonel R. Mustafin on the eve of the 27th anniversary of Palestinian Revolution Day:

"I would put the calling of the international conference on the Near East in first place in a series of very important events for the Near East peoples. In their capacity as cochairmen the United States and the Soviet Union managed to get Arabs and Israelis around the same negotiating table for the first time. Herein, in my view, lies the conference's historic significance. The Arab delegations are acting under the 'peace for territory' slogan and advocating the need to fulfill the well-known UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.

"All this gives us Palestinians hope for a just settlement of the Near East conflict and an end to the state of permanent confrontation, which has been going on for several decades now. Real hope has emerged for the Palestinian people of creating an independent state which would be able to make its own worthy contribution to the establishment of a lasting, fair, and secure peace in our region. We hope that the negotiating process will be continued next year and that it will bear its own positive fruits.

"As regards the situation in the Soviet Union, which ceased to exist a few days ago and is now being transformed into a Commonwealth, I want to believe that the transformations in your country will be in the interests of the peoples populating it. We hope for political wisdom from the leaders of the independent states which were formerly union republics. We believe that your peoples will be able to overcome the difficulties and will again play a significant role in the international arena, including the Near East. We have always regarded your country as a great friend of the Arabs and we hope that we will be able to preserve this friendship in spite of everything."

Israeli Delegation Invited to Muslim States

PM0601113092 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA
in Russian 31 Dec 91 p 3

[TASS report: "Invitation to Tel Aviv"]

[Text] Tel Aviv—An Israeli diplomatic delegation has received an invitation to visit those Muslim states which form part of the Commonwealth of Independent States—this was announced Sunday [29 December] by Israeli Foreign Minister David Levi. He also informed the government that the leaders of four of the former USSR's Muslim republics have been invited to Israel. However, he did not specify exactly which republics are concerned here.

Fewer Emigres Leave for Israel in 1991

PM0601122392 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian
28 Dec 92 Union Edition p 2

[Untitled report from REUTER, TASS, UPI, AP, FP roundup]

[Text] The number of Jews who emigrated to Israel from the Soviet Union in 1991 was considerably down on expectations. According to forecasts, 400,000 were due, but only 140,000 arrived.

The fall in emigration is due, in particular, to lack of work in Israel and the reduction in allowances paid to new arrivals. According to some hypotheses, the flow of emigrants could increase because of the breakup of the Soviet Union and the grave economic situation in the country.

Reasons for De Klerk's Cancelled Visit Viewed

PM0601110192 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian
31 Dec 91 Union Edition p 5

[Report by B. Pilyatskin: "South African President Confirms Invitation"]

[Text] RSA [Republic of South Africa] President Frederik de Klerk has made a special statement in connection with M. Gorbachev's resignation. This document is interesting in that it appeared just two weeks after his visit to Moscow was canceled at the initiative of the South African side.

A curious detail: IZVESTIYA has learned from a trustworthy source that M. Gorbachev had already approved the text of a joint statement which E. Shevardnadze and R. Botha were to sign on the restoration of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

Here the top echelon to all appearances had to overcome the resistance of officials at the USSR Foreign Ministry (latterly the Ministry of External Relations) which for many years, to please the African National Congress, had done everything to delay setting up relations with the RSA. In a telephone conversation with the editorial office a leader of the African countries administration expressed the wish that the newspaper should not call F. de Klerk's visit a visit, but should think up another word for it—trip or call and so forth. He also made every attempt to stress that the Ministry of External Relations had not invited the South African president.

Many of these nuances could not of course fail to be noted by the South Africans who were preparing the visit in Moscow and Pretoria. That should have made them all the more sympathetic toward the position of the USSR president who at the end of his career decided to break the ice with regard to the RSA and discard obsolete dogmas. This warmth and sympathy shows through every line of F. de Klerk's statement.

It says that some time ago he sent a personal letter to Gorbachev explaining the reasons why F. de Klerk could not make the trip to Moscow. The letter contained an invitation to the USSR president to visit the RSA. Now F. de Klerk confirms his invitation to the man who is no longer head of the Soviet state but simply Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev.

CSFR's Havel Remarks on Gorbachev's Role

92UF0405A Moscow PRAVDA in Russian
30 Dec 91 p 5

[Article by Andrey Krushinskiy: "Giant or Bungler?"]

[Text] In view of the importance of the events taking place in our country, the Czechoslovakian Government had to work even at Christmas time: at its session at the end of last week it welcomed the formation of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

As J. Dienstbier, deputy chairman of the Government, announced, the CSFR recognizes the succession of Russia as the successor to the USSR in international organizations, including the Security Council of the United Nations, even though the recently initiated Czechoslovak-Soviet agreement "is not automatically transferred to the Russian Federation".

Meanwhile, V. Havel, president of the CSFR, sent M. Gorbachev a telegram expressing gratitude for his policy of democratization and perestroika. "You have helped many by this," it says, "...You have also helped us—Czechoslovakia and the other states of Central Europe."

At the same time, the Bratislav PRAVDA, in commenting on the retirement of the Soviet president, writes that "his idea of perestroika remained only an idea, although it influenced development in the country and the world. In his own country," the newspaper notes further, "many people do not even want to hear his name." ("He gave us freedom? But did he not at the same time destroy the elementary possibility of existence?")

"Is he a naive dreamer, who believed in the possibility of reforming Leninist and Stalinist communism, or the deliberate destroyer of the system?" This question was asked in the commentary "Pude Pravo" [The Right to Land]. "Gorbachev," the newspaper continues, "will go down in history as a man who most abruptly urged the machine of the Soviet system to the precipice, although it is possible that he wanted to move it in quite the other direction. Or did he not? The question remains: was he a giant or a bungler?"

EC Official on Distribution of Food Aid

LD0301165892 Moscow TASS in English 1505 GMT
3 Jan 92

[By TASS diplomatic correspondents Aleksey Luzin and Leonid Timofeyev]

[Text] Moscow January 3 TASS—"Much of the food aid received in Moscow and St. Petersburg from EC countries will be sold for fixed wholesale prices to retail traders," head of the EC Commission's mission in Moscow Michael Emerson told a news conference here today.

Emerson noted that EC Commission experts would see that retail prices do not exceed reasonable levels. The commission has concluded an agreement with West European companies to control the sales of delivered food products. Specialists from these companies will supervise the delivery and storage of goods, will draw up blank forms for contracting shops, will carry out audits. Emerson did not rule out possible surprise checks at shops in order to prevent the meat, butter and other products disappearing from the "back door".

EC food aid, valued at 200 million ECUs (240 million U.S. dollars) will appear on sale in January-February, 1992. The obtained profits will be spent on programmes of social aid to low-paid sections of the population. Hence, the purpose of EC humanitarian aid is to alleviate the shock from the liberalisation of prices.

The overall large-scale programme of EC humanitarian aid is subdivided into several programmes: the programme of free-of-charge food aid, amounting to 250 million ECU, which was launched at the end of 1991, the programme to guarantee private West-European bank credits to the sum of 500 million ECU, a programme of direct credits, amounting to 1,250 million ECU (both envisage deliveries of food products), as well as food aid to Moscow and St. Petersburg.

UK Experts 'Concerned' Over Nuclear Secrets

LD0501211692 Moscow Russian Television Network
in Russian 1800 GMT 5 Jan 92

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] A leak from British intelligence has come to light today. British intelligence experts are seriously concerned about the possibility of the creation of an Islamic union of Near East states and the former Central Asian republics of the USSR. The economic situation in the former Union is extremely difficult, and, therefore, British experts think the Central Asian states, and Azerbaijan too, are now very vulnerable to the advances of the rich Arab countries.

Some members of the British Government think that—given the increasing emigration from our country of nuclear scientists—Iran, Libya, and perhaps even Iraq will be able to create nuclear weapons by 1995. The

International Atomic Energy Agency has already obtained data—as yet unconfirmed—that recruiters have appeared in Tajikistan offering major contracts to local scientists. According to information from British sources, Iran is currently offering many goods in exchange for Soviet nuclear technology and equipment.

Western Group of Forces Facility Trespassed

*LD0501180492 Moscow TASS International Service
in Russian 1130 GMT 5 Jan 92*

[By TASS correspondent Cyacheslav Katayayev]

[Text] Berlin, 5 Jan (TASS)—On the night of 4 January, two unknown persons illegally penetrated a Western Group of Forces [WGF] installation in the town of Eberswalde-Finow (Brandenburg Land). The sentry yelled in German "Stop or I will shoot!" but the offenders did not react. In accordance with the garrison's rules, the sentry, Private I. Amonov, fired a warning shot in the air. As a result one offender disappeared and the other—German citizen Mirko Teuble, 20—was detained.

The WGF military commandant's office informed the German police about the incident and handed the offender over to them. An investigation into the incident is being carried out by the WGF military police and the German police.

A TASS correspondent was told about the incident today at the WGF press center.

Bank Official Comments on Debt Payment

*LD0601013692 Moscow TASS in English 2025 GMT
5 Jan 92*

[By TASS correspondent Aleksandr Krivykh]

[Text] Paris January 5 TASS—"The agreement reached in Paris on the postponement of payment of the former Soviet Union's foreign debt is probably not the best one, not the one we should like to have, but it is the best we managed to sign," said Tomas Aligbekov, deputy chairman of the board of Vneshekonombank. He commented here today on the results of the conference on problem of the Soviet foreign debt, which was held in the French capital. The conference was attended by representatives of 17 Western countries which had granted credits to the former USSR.

The conference decided to postpone the payment of the main part of the Soviet debt, which was to be paid between December 5, 1991, and the end of 1992 and which includes medium-term and long-term debts by the loans granted before January 1, 1991. The postponement was granted for the payment of 32 billion dollars from the main debt. The overall debt of the Soviet Union is estimated at 70 to 80 billion dollars.

Aligbekov stressed in an interview circulated by FRANCE-PRESSE that "this does not mean that we are unable to pay our debts." The thing is that we are "in a chaotic situation." "If the reform is implemented, the situation may improve rather quickly, starting from 1993," he believes.

Commonwealth

Shaposhnikov Active on Armed Forces Issues

News Conference on Ukraine Action

PM0501191592 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian
6 Jan 92 Morning Edition p 1

[Report by Viktor Litovkin: "Marshal of Aviation Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov Protests Ukrainian Leadership's Actions"]

[Text] Marshal of Aviation Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov, commander in chief of the Commonwealth Armed Forces, held a news conference at the General Staff building, Arbat Square, late on the evening of Saturday, 4 January.

He issued a statement that the Ukrainian leadership is violating the accords reached in Minsk on creating independent states' armed forces.

"No one denies the right of every state to its own army," he said. "But we hope that these questions will be resolved stage by stage, in a consistent manner, and on the basis of mutual accords, rather than without prior arrangement, as is now being done—particularly insofar as the problems of dividing up the Armed Forces affect not just the defense capability of all states but the lives of hundreds of thousands of officers and their families.

Some 75,000 Russian officers and thousands of Belarusians, Tatars, and representatives of the peoples of Central Asia and Kazakhstan are now serving in Ukraine. And all of them are literally going to be made to swear an oath of allegiance to Ukraine, facing them with a difficult either-or choice. Those who will not swear allegiance to the Ukrainian people must either go to another state or be discharged from the Army.

"Such an approach," the marshal of aviation stated, "is uncivilized."

He drew journalists' attention to the fact that the systems of troop command and notification by the General Staff had been cut off by order of the Ukrainian defense minister. Ukraine is also trying to subordinate to itself the units and combined units which back up the strategic forces' actions and ensure their strategic operability [ustoychivoist], which is unacceptable.

"I do not think that the disintegration of our defense and the Armed Forces is in the interests of the people, although such actions are being taken in the people's name," he said.

"I, as commander in chief of the Armed Forces, bear responsibility for the lives of people in uniform, for the state of the Army and the Navy, and for the security of our states," the marshal stated. "And I urge the peoples,

parliamentarians, and leaders of Commonwealth countries to show common sense and the utmost consideration and levelheadedness when deciding the fate of the Armed Forces, and I hope for mutual understanding on their part."

Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov said that a transitional period is essential in resolving questions concerning creating separate armed forces in those states which seek this.

He cited an example. Ukraine claims all aircraft stationed on its territory. But it does not have a single plant capable of providing engines, spare parts, or wheels for combat aircraft. This means that the planes would be unable to fly within three-four months, and no one knows how, on what bases—by barter or in exchange for rubles or hard currency—Russia will supply the Ukrainian Air Force's needs.

The marshal suggested (such a scenario was, incidentally, expounded by our newspaper in issue No. 308 last year) that certain republics are so vigorously engaged in "fighting" for their own army and navy not in order to defend their independence and sovereignty but in order to sell the military hardware and weapons stockpiled on their territory and thereby put their economic affairs right.

"But in that case too," he said, "quotas and norms agreed to with the other states must be worked out."

Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov avoided giving a direct answer to your IZVESTIYA correspondent's question about how the Russian leadership is reacting to the Ukrainian decision to transfer the Black Sea Fleet to its command. He said that in general all military questions have to be decided at the intergovernmental and interstate level, and representatives of the Armed Forces Main Command [glavkomat] could participate in talks as experts.

As everyone knows, Ruslan Khasbulatov, chairman of the Russian parliament, appeared on television's First Program that same evening. He stated that the Russian Federation regards all four of the former Union's fleets as its own. And we have been informed from circles close to President Yeltsin that a decree on the Armed Forces of the former Union has been prepared, which Russia, as its legal successor and recognized as such by the whole world, is taking under its own jurisdiction.

But Boris Yeltsin has not signed this decree. He considers that such a step could disrupt the fragile accord that exists in the Commonwealth. The experts who prepared the decree question the viability of the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States]. They consider that the insoluble problems confronting its members will sooner or later lead to its sundering. But in the one case Russia will be left with the Army; in the other, it will be left without it.

A group of Russian Supreme Soviet deputies has appealed to the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet. They request that the Ukrainian parliamentarians revoke the demand that officers of the Black Sea Fleet take an oath of

allegiance to the Ukrainian people, and prevent the raising of the republic's state flag above the fleet's ships. Such actions, they consider, are in breach of the Alma-Ata and Minsk agreements and create a dangerous situation. The fifteen signatures on the open letter to colleagues in Kiev include that of Russian Federation Vice President Aleksandr Rutskoy.

The question of the fate of the Black Sea Fleet could actually become, in the very near future, the most acute issue in relations between these two states of the new Commonwealth.

The next few days and weeks will show whether the Commonwealth states will be able to find a dignified way out of the crisis emerging due to the division of the Army and Navy. In any event, the sailors of the Black Sea Fleet have both flags—Russian and Ukrainian—in reserve.

Calls for 'Maximum Reason'

LD0401195992 Moscow Teleradiokompanii Ostankino
Television First Program Network in Russian
1900 GMT 4 Jan 92

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] Now is perhaps the moment when only delicate diplomacy can find a way out of the situation. Commenting on current events, journalists write that the clash in the Slav family could provide an example for a protracted cold confrontation. At a news conference Marshal Shaposhnikov talked about the results of his talks.

The Minsk accords, in the view of Marshal Shaposhnikov, gave hope that the reform of the armed forces would proceed in a civilized fashion. But even today the Ukrainian leadership is subordinating to its defense ministry three military districts and the Black Sea fleet, the system of directing and notifying troops is being switched from the General Staff, and one hears unambiguous hints that servicemen who don't swear an oath of allegiance to Ukraine can go and serve on the territory of other states. But there are at present over 75,000 officers serving in Ukraine from Russia alone.

Of course, if need be, they will be accepted in any of our krais or oblasts, including Moscow. Gavriil Popov gave an assurance of this today to the commander in chief of the Commonwealth armed forces. But do we need to allow things to go that far? Marshal Shaposhnikov said with regret that at present not yet all of the leaders of the sovereign states have a sufficiently clear idea of what problems and difficulties—and not only technical, organisational ones, but primarily human ones—they will encounter following the creation of their own armed forces.

[Begin Shaposhnikov recording] Since I, as commander in chief of the Commonwealth armed forces, bear responsibility for the fate of men in epaulettes, their families, for the state of the army and navy, and for the security of the states of the Commonwealth, I appeal to

the peoples, parliaments, and to the esteemed leaders of the states of our Commonwealth, with a request to show maximum reason, balance, and sober thinking in resolving the fate of the armed forces. I hope for mutual understanding. [end recording]

Nuclear, Strategic Forces' Transfer

OW0401121092 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1115 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Now there are only two "nuclear buttons", or "black suitcases", IF's [INTERFAX] correspondent Petr Vasilyev was told by Marshal Shaposhnikov, commander-in-chief of the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] Armed Forces. "One is in the possession of Russia's president, and the other in my hands", he said. Earlier there was a third "button", in the hands of the chief of General Staff.

In comments on the recent top-level meeting in Minsk the marshal said that participants in it gained a full consensus on strategic forces. They agreed that strategic forces will be under a joint command. Tactical nuclear forces will also be under joint control.

All presidents in the possession of nuclear weapons are in the same position. Under certain circumstances they will be able to consult with each other, Marshal Shaposhnikov pointed out.

As for tactical nuclear arms deployed in some republics, they will be destroyed on Russia's soil.

Five states: Russia, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Armenia spoke in favor of unified armed forces. The rest announced their desire to have armed forces of their own.

Since the Ukraine already adopted many legislative acts in this connection, the process of transferring conventional armed forces to it has already begun.

A coordinating committee led by deputy commander-in-chief CL- [Colonel] General Piankov has been formed. On January 2 it began to work in the Ukraine. The most important documents will be signed by the Ukrainian Government and Marshal Shaposhnikov. In the next two months Marshal Shaposhnikov will hold talks and consultations with the leaders of each member state with a view to working out a joint stand on the ways to monitor conventional armed forces and exercise their right to create armed forces of their own. In the following two months the commander-in-chief and his aides will work in all sovereign states by turns. He hopes to find common approaches as well as reveal the differences. The heads of state are planning to gather for another meeting within two months to gain final understandings.

Interview Detailed

OW0401154492 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1441 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The commander-in-chief of the CIS Armed Forces Marshal Shaposhnikov gave an exclusive interview to IF's [INTERFAX's] correspondent Petr Vasiliyev. A brief version of this interview was presented in our previous news bulletin. Now at the request of our subscribers we present the interview in more detail.

The military reform:

Currently a more extensive reform than the one planned by the military initially is taking place, said Marshal Shaposhnikov.

Communist Party cells in the Army were disbanded. The Army's political structures were reformed. Their central apparatus lost a powerful unit: the Defence Ministry's main inspection committee. Now the so-called "paradise group" (the aging marshals who performed the purely symbolic functions of army inspectors: IF) is to be cut. The next step will be to reduce the main commands of 4 directions: Western, South-Western, Southern and Eastern.

New legislative acts were adopted to ensure social security for servicemen and raise their wages. Certain Army regulations were revised. The Army will follow regulations in keeping with modern times. The articles conflicting with the spirit of our times were deleted. Documents have been drafted to ensure transition to a mixed principle of recruitment.

In 1992 the Army intends to adopt the mixed principle of recruitment. There will be obligatory Army service along with service under contract. By 1995 the nucleus of military professionals will be formed.

The military doctrine:

This doctrine is being worked out. It will have to be coordinated between all members of the CIS. It won't change fundamentally. Its basis will remain defensive, but some of its provisions will have to be altered. The interests of all member states will have to be taken into account.

The qualitative parameters of improving the Armed Forces, the quality of training servicemen, the quality of military equipment and qualitatively new thinking will underlie the endeavors to work out the new doctrine.

The use of Armed Forces inside the country:

The stand of Marshal Shaposhnikov is firm: The Armed Forces should not be involved in the efforts to settle political, ethnic or other disputes. It's none of the Army's business. The marshal intends to do all he can to make it impossible for political leaders to use the army to gain their unseemly goals.

Sends Text of Oath to Ukraine

OW0301210092 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1944 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] IF [INTERFAX] learned from well-informed military sources that Aviation Marshal Yevgeny Shaposhnikov had sent last Thursday [2 January] a telegram to all units stationed in Ukraine and the Black Sea Navy. The telegram demanded that every serviceman doing military duty on Ukrainian territory must take [the] military oath.

Shaposhnikov demanded that the oath of allegiance be taken to the commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces (i.e., Marshal Shaposhnikov), and also, each serviceman must swear his loyalty to the member state of the Commonwealth he does service in.

A report from the headquarters of the Black Sea Navy says that 90 [percent] of the naval personnel refuse to swear loyalty to Marshal Shaposhnikov and are only willing to swear loyalty to Ukraine.

IF learned that there are rallies taking place in Sevastopol that criticize the position of the Black Sea Navy personnel. The rallies were organized by civilians.

Report 'Refuted'

OW0401135692 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1115 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Official sources from the Black Sea Fleet command have categorically refuted the IF [INTERFAX] report (January 3, 21:00) to the effect that 90 per cent of the Black Sea fleet personnel refused to take the oath of allegiance to the Commonwealth, proposed by Marshal Shaposhnikov.

One of the Black Sea fleet commanders stressed that the text of the oath had been received from Marshal Shaposhnikov on Thursday [2 January] evening and that the personnel began to discuss it on Friday [3 January]. "Therefore, there can be no talk about any figures," he said.

Minsk, Kiev Positions on Armed Forces Issue**General Overview**

LD0501211792 Moscow Russian Television Network
in Russian 1800 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Video Report by presenter Yuriy Rostov; from the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] Active discussions have been continuing today on Ukraine's departure from the principles of the military commonwealth and the documents that were signed by the Ukrainian president himself in Minsk. We do not

think that these deviations, alongside the economic contradictions, are capable of leading to the disintegration of the Commonwealth of Independent States [CIS], but deviation from them is of course important. The CIS is in our view a pretty stable association, by virtue of its amorphousness, inter alia: the members of the Commonwealth are not linked together by great obligations to such a degree that infringement of these would lead to members refusing to agree on joint action altogether.

So here are the positions on military issues taken up by Ukraine and the CIS.

[Unidentified woman reads out headings on screen]
Minsk: Combined command of joint purpose forces;
Kiev: Troops subordinate to the president of Ukraine;

Minsk: Armed forces are created stage by stage, on the basis of mutual accord; Kiev: Troops transfer to jurisdiction of Ukraine from 3 January 1992;

Minsk: Status of armed forces are for the interim period determined by special agreements; Kiev: Status of armed forces is determined by the legislation of Ukraine.

Ukraine currently proceeds from the standpoint that its armed forces consist of the Kiev, Odessa, and Carpathian military districts, and the forces of the Black Sea Fleet. But after issuing a decree on putting the border troops under the jurisdiction of the president, Leonid Kravchuk put his signature to the CIS Agreement on Armed Forces and Border Troops, which envisages unified command of these troops.

Khasbulatov Comments

LD0401194192 Moscow Teleradiokompanii Ostankino
Television First Program Network in Russian
1900 GMT 4 Jan 92

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] Extremely important information has come in today which places a serious question mark over the viability of the new Commonwealth. All previous accords are cracking because of the question of who will control the Armed Forces and, along with the Armed Forces, the secret briefcase containing the nuclear button. We should not depart from the Minsk and Alma-Ata accords if we want to preserve the Commonwealth—this is how Ruslan Khasbulatov, chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation, commented on the statements by a number of leaders of sovereign states on the changed subordination of military units of the Soviet Army.

In an interview with our correspondent today, he said the following, among other things:

[Begin Khasbulatov recording] During recent days we have been experiencing very great tension because there is an immense number of telegrams from officers, soldiers, and warrant officers stationed in various units, various regions outside Russia. And I would like, using

your question, as you have put such a question, to say absolutely firmly that the armed forces, the army, was created, of course, with the overwhelming support of Russia, the Russian state, the Russian Federation.

As for all the fleets, for example, it is natural that they are fully subordinate to Russia, and attempts to bring them under certain flags, attempts to make them swear an oath, by individual states—I personally, as the head of the Russian parliament, see these as totally illegitimate. I would like to say that all of our servicemen should feel confident. They will be under our protection, under the protection of the Russian state. [end recording]

Shushkevich, Landsbergis Discuss Association

LD0401222392 Moscow Programma Radio Odin
Network in Russian 1700 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Text] The meeting of the leaders of Belarus and Lithuania started today in Belovezhskaya Pushcha, the birthplace of the Commonwealth of Independent States [CIS]. As a BELTA correspondent learned from well-informed sources, Stanislav Shushkevich and Vytautas Landsbergis are discussing the urgent issues of interstate relations with regard to the establishing of the CIS. In the opinion of observers, bilateral economic links may also become subject of the talks, alongside the issues of the implementation of reforms, the prospects for cooperation in the current conditions of open borders and, a single currency.

As far as the post of a CIS secretary general is concerned, according to Stanislav Shushkevich, this issue was unanimously rejected at the meeting in Minsk immediately before the New Year. If there were to be a coordinating position of some kind, it will be, at best, the head of the secretariat, the leader of the Belarus parliament pointed out.

Shevardnadze Urges Internal Conflict Resolution

LD0401075292 Moscow TASS in English
0739 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Text] Moscow January 4 TASS—Former Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze believes the most urgent task for the new Commonwealth of Independent States is to find a way to solve conflicts inside its member-states. "I plan to pool intellectual and material resources to solve the problem of internal conflicts," Shevardnadze, who is president of a foreign policy association which he himself created, told the "NAZAVISIMAYA GAZETA" on Saturday [4 January].

Shevardnadze and the "NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA" editing board jointly created a centre of ethnopolitical research which will deal with the problem. It will analyse and forecast developments which may lead to internal conflicts. The centre plans to use internationally acclaimed conflict mediators, to create an information pool and carry out research in ethnic and humanitarian law. Shevardnadze also said the organisation will work

out new criteria of humanitarian aid and an international infrastructure to help the poorest people.

Document on Economic Coordination Viewed

*PM0501220392 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian
3 Jan 92 Morning Edition p 2*

[Article by Valeriy Konovalov: "They Want To Order the Market About"]

[Excerpts] The editorial office has received a document entitled "Protocol Coordinating Measures To Be Taken To Preserve Economic Ties in the First Quarter of 1992 Among Enterprises, Associations, and Organizations Located on the Territories of the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States]." It was signed by the leaders of the governments of all 11 members of the CIS. [passage omitted]

Of course, the document is of a provisional nature. It could be presented as an attempt to avoid economic chaos during the transition to real market relations. But is this realistic? And does it not lead still further away from the market?

For it is a question of preserving in the first quarter of this year the economic ties which have, in the main, already been destroyed over the past year—precisely because of numerous compromises, half-measures, and attempts to combine movement toward the market with administrative diktat. If it was not possible within the framework of the Union, from a unified center, to arrange normal interaction among enterprises using administrative methods, will it be any easier to do this now using the same methods? The desire to make suppliers and independent enterprises abandon barter and build relations on a ruble basis is also problematic. Finally, the CIS members' own problems could enter into conflict with interstate interests—which is already happening at every step. But without a market mechanism and without radical economic reforms it is hardly possible to settle this problem in the Commonwealth states.

Commentary on Unity of Armed Forces Issue

*LD0301161392 Moscow Teleradiokompanii Ostankino
Television First Program Network in Russian
1300 GMT 3 Jan 92*

[Text] The disintegration of the Union has posed the question of the unity of the Armed Forces. In Minsk on 30 December, the presidents of the 11 states agreed that each of them has the right to set up its own armed forces and resolved that within a two-month term the issue of the management of the common-purpose forces will be decided.

At the same time, Ukraine stated that all the troops located on its territory with the exception of the nuclear forces will be transferred to the direct control of the president of Ukraine and the republic's Defense Ministry. Today NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA reported that the troops of the three military districts located on the

territory of Ukraine are to take an oath of loyalty to the people of the Ukraine. However, today it was reported to us by telephone that neither in the Odessa, nor the Transcarpathian, nor the Kiev district nor in the Black Sea fleet will the new oath be taken today. It is still an open question, too, as to whom the units of formations of the three military districts of the Black Sea fleet that are located in Ukraine will belong.

Moldova and Azerbaijan have also stated their intention to set up their own armed forces.

To resolve these and other issues Marshal Shaposhnikov has departed on a trip around the republics that are members of the Commonwealth of Independent States [CIS]. The first point was Minsk, the CIS capital. At a meeting between Shaposhnikov, commander in chief of the CIS Armed Forces, and Stanislav Shushkevich, chairman of the Belarussian Supreme Soviet, Belarus' agreement to hand over strategic nuclear weapons located on its territory to a unified command was again confirmed. It was however stipulated that in the event of necessity they can only be used with the consent of the leadership of the republic. During the talks in Minsk it was unambiguously stated to Shaposhnikov that Belarus intends to have its own army.

Rumor of Baltic-Black Sea Association Reported

*LD0401213292 Moscow Teleradiokompanii Ostankino
Television First Program Network in Russian
1900 GMT 4 Jan 92*

[Commentary by correspondent Mikhail Osokin; from the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] Serious differences of opinion have emerged between Russia and Ukraine, the leading states of the Commonwealth. Kiev, for example, has criticized the Russian reform program, and has declared it will move to the market its own way. Prices are being freed in Ukraine, too, but Ukraine intends to protect its own way by using coupons, without which rubles will be practically useless. Other republics have been compelled to free prices in Moscow's wake, but are following Kiev's example and introducing coupons. They are trying to protect their cheaper markets from an invasion of purchasers from Russia. As a result, Ukrainian leaders' predictions that the common ruble zone will become a fiction may come true.

The agreements already signed have been infringed on various sides. Those introducing coupons are violating their promise to build economic relations on the basis of the ruble, while Russia's refusal to wait a bit before introducing reforms, as the other republics asked, is hardly in accord with the article in the agreement on implementing a coordinated price freeing policy.

Positions diverge on military issues, too. The majority of republics are in favor of turning the Soviet Army into combined armed forces. But Azerbaijan, Moldova, and Ukraine plan to turn part of the Soviet troops into their

own armies, and Belarus plans to do the same in the long term, to judge from the latest reports from Minsk.

Against the background of these differences of opinion, the solution of the question of strategic arsenals looks to be an important achievement: the republics agreed on unified control of nuclear weapons, and immediately after Gorbachev's resignation, the nuclear button was passed to President Yeltsin of Russia. According to some descriptions, this is a little suitcase with ciphers and a computer resembling a football in shape. The ciphers have been altered, and Gorbachev henceforth does not know them.

The republics also agreed that decisions on the need to use nuclear weapons will be taken by the president of Russia, in coordination with the leaders of Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine, and in consultation with the heads of the other states of the Commonwealth. However, many observers in the West are still not wholly clear what the future structure of Soviet nuclear arsenals will look like, given that Belarus and Ukraine have declared their readiness to be non-nuclear, whereas Kazakhstan has taken up a special position on this issue. Kazakhstan may wait and see: if the Commonwealth collapses, then the Central Asian republics may decide to create their own bloc, and Kazakhstan will head it.

Meanwhile, there has already been talk of other possible blocs. In the lobby at the Minsk meeting, there were persistent rumors going around that Ukraine, Belarus, and the Baltic states could set up a Baltic-Black Sea association, without Russia taking part. This may well be just rumors, but one thing is evident: there are serious problems facing the Commonwealth. And the main problem is that the members of the Commonwealth are 11 republics with 11 different programs, but there is no one leader who enjoys sufficient authority or gravitational force to pull all of them in the same direction.

'Commonwealth of Uncivilized States' Observed

OW0301184992 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1723 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Report by diplomatic correspondent Mikhail Mayorov from "Diplomatic Panorama"; transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The relationships taking shape within the Commonwealth of Independent States have been a source of frustration, rather than inspiration, for people in Europe and worldwide. The Minsk summit of December 30, according to one of Russia's diplomats appointed to assess its results, vividly showed how dangerous nationalism may be if it is adopted as a dominant form of intergovernmental relations. "So far one can speak only of a 'Commonwealth of Uncivilized States', considering the imminent political and military disputes, as well as clashes on property-related and other matters," the diplomat said.

According to some observers, nationalism is something that each ex-Soviet republic, big and small, has been gravely afflicted by. Those blaming the present differences exclusively on the Ukraine must be overlooking the fact that the Russians are regarding other nationalities with an undue degree of "ethnic superiority"—an attitude particularly conspicuous on the part of those whom the tide of recent political events has brought right into government cabinets.

The fight for ex-USSR property raging between Russia and the Ukraine shows that the two newly independent states longing for access to the international political arena still have to learn a lot from the universally accepted "code of behavior". The Ukrainian leaders' desire to have armed forces of their own is well understandable, considering the widespread public sentiments in the republic. On the other hand, the West would much rather have the military stay under centralized command within the ex-Soviet borders. The "uncivilized" behavior of the Commonwealth member states is vividly reflected in their total disregard for the interests of neighbors. The Ukraine, for one, is claiming full control over all the non-nuclear vessels of the Black Sea Fleet—Russia's old-time pride—as well as over three military districts with all their hardware, weapon depots and proving ranges. The shipyards of Nikolayev, where surface ships and submarines for the Northern and Pacific Fleets used to be assembled, will transfer to Ukrainian jurisdiction too.

A senior Russian diplomat who asked not to be identified told journalists that "in terms of its territory the Ukraine is another France, and in terms of its ambitions it's another China." However, Russia's ambitions do not seem to be any more moderate, since the same diplomat insisted that Russia should be proclaimed not only the legal successor of the USSR but also a "continuation state" inheriting the full scope of rights from the ex-Soviet Union. "The other independent states may open foreign missions in whatever form they may choose," the diplomat commented.

The Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk, for his part, thinks it abnormal to have the Russian tricolor hoisted over the ex-Soviet embassies in various countries. He insists on the division of the ex-USSR's foreign property as well, which Russia's Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev finds to be an instance of "inertia of thinking".

The most experienced and far-sighted observers, far from trying to find out who's right and who's wrong in the Russo-Ukrainian dispute, have been trying to guess how viable the Commonwealth, which they say is still a far cry from an entity fitting into that title, may turn out to be. According to Lithuania's deputy head of parliament Kazimieras Motieka, the Commonwealth will not last long. The Moldovan parliamentarian Ion Tsurkanu does not see any future for the CIS, either.

No comment has come so far from the politician whom the formation of the Commonwealth of Independent

States left without a job and who should regard the present situation from the angle "the worse, the better." But it seems quite possible that Mikhail Gorbachev may one day say something like "You were unwise enough to prefer Minsk to Novo-Ogarevo; I warned you against it, but you wouldn't listen."

Optimism Urged Despite Interethnic Conflicts

PM0301171092 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA
in Russian 1 Jan 92 pp 1, 4

[Article by Oleg Vladyskin: "Let Us Prophesy Prosperity for Ourselves: An Attempt To Look to the Future Optimistically"]

[Text] Astrologers and psychics, palmists and mediums acknowledge from time to time, in passing, that there are, so to speak, various possibilities in the workings of any human destiny. At least until such time as an attempt is made to foretell the ghostly shape of things to come. But as soon as someone uncovers to the individual concerned the hidden outlines of his destiny, the prophecies, so they say, are bound inevitably to come true—especially the worst ones. I don't know how far this law of nature is really determined by astral connections or whether the masters of prophecy are free from guile, but psychologists observed long ago that if a man believes in the inevitability of certain disasters in his life, he quite often gets them, because he himself unconsciously works toward them.

You would have thought that each of us individually and all of us collectively had had plenty of opportunities to see the truth of this in the last few years. With a unanimity that is amazing in these times of rampant pluralism, the majority of us have perceived disasters ahead in the many new phenomena of life in our country. And we have hardly made a mistake in our gloomy predictions. It would be fine if we were to learn useful lessons from what happens and not go on testing fate... But no, with the fervor of hardened masochists we go on predicting even more suffering for ourselves in future, awaiting with inexplicable schadenfreude the moment when we can once again exclaim: "Aha! But surely you didn't expect anything to turn out sensibly in our country?"

It is not hard to understand why, for instance, across the ocean Mr. R. Gates is prophesying the most serious civil disorders in the former USSR since the time the Bolsheviks came to power. First, that is the CIA director's job. And second, he doesn't have to live here. But how do you explain the continuing pessimism of our own prophets? Despite their sometimes diametrically opposed political views and aspirations and differences of social experience, once again they are in unison in their predictions of impending cataclysms. Can it be true that although they profess different approaches to tackling our most acute problems, they are united in being unable to conceive of any way forward except through upheavals?

Colonel V. Alksnis, cochairman of the "Soyuz" ["Union"] deputies' group which disappeared along with

the Union, has been predicting civil war since before the putsch, and still is to this day. In Moscow, he says, chaos could prevail, and crowds of people will march along Tverskaya Street, raiding the stores to right and left. The well-known economist Russian People's Deputy T. Koryagina believes that criminal capital will find some way to take control of the privatized economy. And if, say, the Yeltsin doctrine is implemented after all, a period reminiscent of the Pugachev rebellion will ensue. But these are the views of what you could call the opposition today. Yet even that prominent authority in democratic circles, the former foreign minister of the USSR of the time when perestroika flourished, and now also former external relations minister of the USSR of the period of perestroika's decline—E. Shevardnadze stated soon after the signing of the Minsk agreement by the three republics' leaders: "The danger of a dictatorship or a putsch in the former USSR still persists."

Merciful God, save and preserve us from such a fate! Because if You do not, will we ourselves be able to turn aside from the path that leads to the precipice and embrace common sense? At the moment we are constantly talking at work, among our families, in waiting lines, and on public transport, hearing again and again on television and radio, and reading in the newspapers about Eduard Amvrosiyevich's [Shevardnadze] prophecy which has already come true once, about the inevitable deterioration in life in our country. We have come to believe too firmly that in the foreseeable future we can expect nothing but new disasters to fall on our hapless heads.

But maybe there has been enough moaning, enough hysterics? Maybe the time has come to look around us calmly and try to find indications of our... well, our nonhopelessness. And then we will certainly see how, at many places in the area formerly known by the name of the Soviet Union, seemingly insoluble contradictions are already being resolved without bloodshed or rioting; we will listen, at last, to those people who grasped earlier than anyone else that universal prosperity is attainable even without our accustomed spirit of sacrifice.

True, extremely simple and natural thoughts suddenly start occurring to statesmen when they tire of the painstaking quest for original solutions to all kinds of sociopolitical crossword puzzles. Their arguments become utterly irrefutable. "I cannot see any specific individuals in the Army who are interested in a putsch," A. Sobchak, mayor of St. Petersburg, told a well-known television journalist in an interview, sharing his impressions from numerous contacts with the military. "The only thing is not to drive these people into a corner, and then there will be no putsch." It is hard not to agree, isn't it? Unless, of course, you are obsessed with the idea of the "naturally reactionary" nature of servicemen, which can blind you completely to their gross lack of legal or social protection. In that case, whatever arguments are adduced, you will just go on stubbornly asserting, like certain commentators who have been programmed once and for all, that a military coup is going to take place any

day now, and that it will be headed by no less a person than Russian Vice President A. Rutskoy. Purely because he has the military rank of major general and is therefore nostalgic for the barracks way of life...

However, it is not easy for any of us to shake off long-held views and ideas. But we must, all the same. Because if we stay as we were we will periodically find ourselves in the very same impasse where we have ended up repeatedly in recent years.

Interethnic conflicts have been and will remain an undying source of grief for the entire population of this vast country. How many lances the politicians have broken in their attempts to prove that in present-day conditions the problem can only be resolved by razing the one unitary state to the ground and creating several autonomous national states out of the ruins. And now the USSR president has resigned and the Union has ceased to exist. But the blood has not ceased to flow in Nagorno-Karabakh, in the territory of what is now sovereign Azerbaijan. People are dying every day in South Ossetia, and the paramilitary formations that have proliferated in independent Georgia are not only fighting there, they are even fighting one another in the very heart of the republic—Tbilisi. How can this turn of events be explained? In the young independent states people are inclined to argue that the main reason for the inevitability of continuing conflicts is the grave legacy of the empire, and they attribute everything to that.

But what if you try to look at a given conflict in a different way? If you turn aside from the widespread stereotype?

No one today is likely to describe Alma-Ata or Osh as a hot spot. But at one time those very cities were the source of reports as alarming as those now coming from Transcaucasia. In December 1986 the disturbances in the capital of Kazakhstan were also patently ethnic in nature, and led to a good many people being injured. In Osh Oblast, in summer 1990, clashes between Kyrgyz and Uzbeks who had long lived together as good neighbors resulted in dozens of fatalities.

Since, in any decent society, you try not to remind people of their misdeeds, I wish to stress that I have returned to these past tragedies with precisely the opposite intention. It would do no harm for all of us former Soviet citizens to get to the bottom of the matter: How did Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, which traveled their own roads to the creation of sovereign states, succeed in diverting the course of events from the rapidly intensifying confrontation between national communities toward the gradual conciliation of the population? It goes without saying that by the usual standards the stability of the situation in the two republics is relative and not necessarily durable. All the same, compared with Transcaucasia, it is a distinct improvement. Despite the fact that the legacy from being in the USSR is certainly no better there. So why did the republics not blow up completely, on acquiring independence?

An in-depth analysis of this question certainly has still to be made. But, setting aside the fear of being accused of oversimplifying, one of the main features of the normalization of life in both republics can be singled out now. For all the differences in the concrete circumstances of the development of the situation in each of them, the two states are identical in that they are putting into practice the revival and self-assertion of the indigenous peoples not by setting them against fellow citizens of different nationalities, not from a position of strength on the part of the majority, but with equal consideration for the interests of all the inhabitants without exception.

President N. Nazarbayev has elevated to the rank of official state policy his own promise as deputy: "I will not call any of Kazakhstan's people immigrants." Before making any important decision President A. Akayev meets and consults with representatives of the nearly 40 national cultural centers that are active in Kyrgyzstan, expressing the interests of various ethnic groups among the population.

How good it would be to see that blessed day soon come when, in all the independent states that we will go on for a long time regarding as our kin, not to say—as in the old days—our own, the apocalyptic mood will absolutely disappear. And aspirations toward consensus and constructive activity will prevail over the mentality of destruction. And no one will weep for the defunct Soviet Union—a vast state system capable of operating only according to the principle of a huge barracks, but which proved absolutely helpless and hopeless as soon as attempts were made to adapt it to civilized forms of existence.

But first, obviously, we must stop thinking of ourselves as poor unfortunates and stop constantly looking for someone to blame for our real and imagined ills, wasting time and effort on settling scores with them. It is better to make businesslike use of what we actually have today. And we do not have all that much.

First and foremost, the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] is the result of a long-awaited compromise between the desire of the former Soviet republics for true sovereignty and the need to preserve the living ties between peoples who have grown together. True, some people see the new formation as the last stage before the final and irreversible collapse of a once great superpower. While Ukrainian President L. Kravchuk sees it as the prototype of the Union whose creation the countries of Western Europe are gradually implementing. Well, that is an inspiring idea. As long as no one is deceived by the toponymic casuistry—Commonwealth... Union... Names are beside the point. It seems that civilization has objectively reached the point where it needs a new form of organization. Only we and Western Europe are progressing toward that new organization from diametrically opposite directions. They are moving away from a multiplicity of national states toward voluntary unification, with the handover of part of each country's sovereignty for the sake of common interests. Our strictly

centralized and until recently multinational state is moving toward a number of independent states, in each of which a single nationality predominates, with certain attributes of sovereignty being retained under joint jurisdiction. So it is not impossible that both they and we will have to learn to live under the conditions of similar social formations; given the will.

When the will exists, some things can turn out quite well even in the kind of global crisis that grips our country. And it has emerged that some sound elements can be preserved, or can spring up, even in a socialist economy in its death throes. It is no accident that the most farsighted Western businessmen are now looking for promising enterprises in our country and investing big capital in their development. And that includes that same military-industrial complex that was regarded as the mainstay of the Soviet bureaucratic edict system and is totally failing to acclimatize to market structures. For instance, BFM, one of America's biggest investment firms, on the strength of the potential of a number of enterprises in the military-industrial complex, has decided to provide currency to back joint conversion projects and to train our cadres to work in open market conditions. A billion-dollar fund is being set up for this purpose, from which the practical Americans presumably expect to obtain considerable benefit for themselves. And many similar examples could be cited.

So let us believe in good prospects. Then they will certainly come true, because they depend first and foremost on ourselves, on the firmness of our desires, on our hopes. And if someone predicts more difficulties for us in future?... Let us turn aside, stop listening, forget. Even if Pavel Globa himself were to make the prediction. Incidentally, that astrologer, who is well known within the former USSR and the present CIS, is promising another putsch for the anniversary of Stalin's death, 5 March. Speaking for myself, I prefer another prediction, made by... Tamara Globa. According to her, the whole of this year will be a year of practical action. That being so, the appeal of B. Yeltsin, president of the Russian Federation, is very apposite: "New times are coming. Let us start learning to live in a new way, with initiative and practical aptitude. Every one of us is capable of tackling all his own problems in life."

Baltics

Council To Hold Meeting in Jurmala on 5 Jan

Agenda Viewed

OW0501184092 Moscow BALTFAX in English
1727 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Leaders of the three former Soviet Baltic nations are holding a sitting of the Baltic Council in Jurmala on January 5. BF [BALTFAX] reports from Jurmala that the meeting of Vytautas Landsbergis, Anatoliy Gorbunovs and Arnold

Ruutel will cover issues connected with the stay of Soviet troops in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. The are also discussing the Baltic strategy vis-a-vis the Commonwealth of Independent States, and the situation in Eastern Europe after the creation of the Commonwealth and issues of Baltic relations with NATO.

It is planned to pass a number of documents, including a demand to the leaders of the Commonwealth to immediately begin talks on the withdrawal of the Soviet Army from the Baltics, to stop sending replacements to these troops and to withdraw all military schools. Ruutel, Gorbunovs and Landsbergis plan to sign a border declaration that Latvia and Estonia will conclude a border treaty in January, and Lithuania and Latvia in February or March.

Troop Presence Main Topic

LD0501210292 Moscow Russian Television Network
in Russian 1800 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Video report from Jurmala by correspondent A. Yakovlev; from the "Vesti" newscast]

[Excerpts] A meeting of the Baltic Council has been held in Jurmala. At the meeting there was a discussion of coordinating the economic and financial policy of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia; questions relating to levelling prices; taxes and tariffs; and the problem of the transition to national currencies. The main topic of the meeting, which was held at Lithuania's initiative, was the presence of troop units and military establishments of the former USSR on Baltic territory. Official documents were adopted. [passage omitted]

The meeting adopted a statement on the fundamental principles of relations between the countries of the Baltic Council and the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Commonwealth Welcomed

LD0501221292 Moscow TASS in English
2154 GMT 5 Jan 92

[By TASS correspondent Galina Kuchina]

[Text] Riga January 5 TASS—The Baltic Council, which met on Sunday [5 January] in the Latvian resort city of Jurmala, urged heads of member states of the new Commonwealth [CIS] to start immediately the withdrawal of troops from their territories. The document they adopted stresses the need for recalling as soon as possible from Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia citizens from the CIS member states, who are serving in the Army there. It was decided to prevent the sending of recruits to the Baltic states and the deployment without their consent of new contingents of troops of the former Soviet Union. Heads of parliaments of the three republics urged CIS members to leave weapons, military

hardware and defence facilities in the Baltic states, so that they can be used for the creation of their defence forces.

The Baltic Council welcomed the creation of the new Commonwealth and expressed confidence that the relations between Baltic states and the CIS members would develop in accordance with principles of interstate relations, recorded in the UN Charter, and with generally recognised international acts, and would rely on traditions of good neighbourliness and cooperation.

The delegations, that took part in the meeting, discussed stages of the restoration of borders between them and the visa-free regime for their residents in the Baltic region. They also discussed proposals on the coordination of the financial policies. The sides exchanged views on measures to stabilise the national currencies.

The meeting adopted a statement on the developments in Georgia. The Baltic Council urged participants in the conflict to stop immediately the fratricidal armed confrontation and violence. Members of the council expressed readiness to cooperate with CIS member states in overcoming economic difficulties, especially in the sphere of energy and food supply.

Anticipated International Aid to Area Detailed

OW0401094692 Moscow BALTFAX in English
1920 GMT 3 Jan 92

["Who Helps the Baltic States and How?"—BALTFAX headline; transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] In 1991 the United extended \$54 m [million] of grants to the three Baltic states, the Lithuanian AIDAS newspaper reports. It says the U.S. grants to Lithuania in 1991-1992 will amount to \$60 m.

Denmark intends to grant Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia \$70.2 m of economic aid. In 1993-1994 Danish aid to the Baltic countries will amount to \$130 m.

Norway granted Lithuania over \$1 million of economic assistance in 1990-1991.

Switzerland intends to extend \$570,000 of aid to the Baltic states in the coming spring.

Canada intends to grant \$2.760 m of aid to the Baltic states.

The Lithuanian newspaper reports that the United Kingdom has already allocated about [figure indistinct] in its budget to help the Baltic states, whereas Sweden has earmarked \$6.06 [figure as received] for these purposes.

Finland has given \$10.38 m of aid to Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia.

In 1991 Lithuania received from the European Community [words indistinct] medical equipment.

Caucasus

Single Economic Zone 'Being Actively Formed'

OW0501004992 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1942 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] A single Caucasian economic zone is now being actively formed. IF's [INTERFAX] correspondent reports from Grozny that a number of consultations on the issue have already been held with leaders of several Caucasian republics, such as Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Abkhazia, Daghestan, Karachayevo-Cherkesiya and Karbardino-Balkariya.

The leaders of the Caucasian republics' governments are expected to meet soon. Also, a special conference will be held with participation of representatives from the Stavropol, Krasnodar and Rostov regions. Supposedly, they will be offered to take part in forming the single Caucasian economic zone.

Military

Heavy Transport Aircraft To Be Relocated

LD0601044792 Moscow POSTFACTUM in English
1912 GMT 5 Jan 92

[From the "Politics" section]

[Text] According to some sources, on January 7-8, seven IL-76-MD heavy transport aircraft with the latest modifications will be relocated from Belarus to Russia. As reported on January 5, officers who wished to remain anonymous of the Vitebsk military transport aircraft unit transformed to the former Vitebsk USSR KGB airborne division. [sentence as received] The relative order has been received from military transport aviation commander Colonel General Yefanov.

The new place of location will be the Pskov unit of military transport aviation operations with the former Pskov USSR KGB airborne division.

According to Belarus republican defense minister's officer on duty Victor Melenityev, the Belarus Defense Ministry possesses no information on the expected relocation, but in the event the operation is carried out the move will contradict the Minsk agreement by the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] state leaders on military property.

Staff Chief on Air Defense Forces' Concerns

PM0601090592 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA
in Russian 24 Dec 91 First Edition p 2

[Interview with Colonel General V. Sinitsyn, chief of the Air Defense Troops Main Staff, by Major A. Ivanov;

place and date not given: "How Many Duplicates of the Keys to Heaven Are There?")

[Text] [Ivanov] Comrade General, what difficulties are the Air Defense Forces experiencing today in connection with the de facto disintegration of the USSR?

[Sinitsyn] If any one of the republics adopts acts that do not take the interests of aerospace defense into account, this may make it more difficult—and very palpably—for the Air Defense Forces to carry out their basic tasks. But none of the sovereign states have as yet adopted documents that might somehow change the defense of the air borders. We have had misunderstandings with individual regional air traffic control centers in the Baltic states, but it appears that common sense is beginning to prevail. In the event of the emergence of individual approaches as regards the use of the airspace in the republics, we are prepared to take them into consideration in the elaboration of legal documents on air defense.

[Ivanov] Today it is a reality that the republics are striving to provide themselves with their own armed forces. The Azerbaijan Republic leadership raised the question of the nationalization of property belonging to the USSR Armed Forces on its territory. Corresponding documents were adopted by the Moldovan and Georgian parliaments. The implementation of these decisions also concerns the Air Defense Forces to a certain extent.

[Sinitsyn] Furthermore, attempts by groups of bandits to seize weapons in isolated subunits, which used to occur before, are now being stepped up. As a result of these actions, in the Transcaucasus alone we have had over 750 units of small arms, thousands of pieces of ammunition, and dozens of vehicles seized and stolen. We have to divert large forces into the defense of positions and military installations. The normal rhythm of combat training and the performance of alert duty are being disrupted.

Demands are also being made to close down or transfer Air Defense Forces installations. Sometimes these demands are justified, but in the majority of cases the problems are invented and not thought through at all. I remember a case in Azerbaijan. Someone spread a rumor that there were some powerful radar sets in a unit that had been redeployed which scanned nearby population centers. Naturally this agitated the public. Rallies were held. But the unit was a training unit. And it does not have any powerful scanning devices at all. When representatives of local organs of power had examined everything, the conflict resolved itself.

[Ivanov] The Air Defense Forces are deployed on the territory of all the former republics. How are the servicemen's social problems being resolved or are they not being resolved?

[Sinitsyn] The troops' specific character is such that the tasks involved in the defense of the air borders are carried out by small subunits and, as a rule, far away

from major population centers. Many problems are arising in this connection. I will dwell on the most commonplace ones, but the ones that are the most important in everyday life. These are difficulties concerning supplies, and particularly food, and the shortage of nurseries and pre-schools. There are problems involved in getting the children to school. But the housing problem is particularly acute. Let me cite a few figures. In the surface-to-air missile troops and the radiotechnical troops, the provision of facilities for over 60 percent of the subunits requires serious improvement. The most serious situation has taken shape in the units and subunits performing alert duty in the Arctic, Siberia, and the mountainous areas of Central Asia and the Transcaucasus. The dilapidated prefabricated houses and barracks built mainly in the 1950's and 1960's have long since outlived their useful life and should be written off. Incidentally, such constructions make up 30 percent of our overall housing stock. In addition there are over 20,000 families without an apartment in the troops, and over 7,000 whose living conditions need to be improved.

A large quantity of buildings, installations, and infrastructure systems need major repairs, and around one-fourth of all military installations do not have centralized heating or water supply systems.

This painful situation has arisen because of the underallocation of capital investment quotas to the Air Defense Forces and the limited possibilities of military construction organizations. The situation will evidently become more difficult in the near future. We will have to find a total of 40-50 million rubles to provide housing for servicemen performing their service in distant areas and places with difficult climatic conditions and for those awaiting release into the reserve, so that we can build apartments in Stavropol, Armavir, Novorossiysk, Kharkov, Poltava, Vitebsk, Mogilev, Vinnitsa, and other cities. The truth is that it is practically impossible to resolve the acute problems without harmonized and coordinated action. Take the Baltic area, for example. The local authorities are not allowing us to inhabit apartments outside military camps which servicemen are vacating. The wives of servicemen are not being given permits, which means that they cannot get jobs. With the high cost of living there and the low salaries of officers and warrant officers, their families are slipping below the poverty line. It is hard to imagine how difficult our lives and service will become given recent events, and what kind of social disasters the nonresolution of vital problems will lead to for many thousands of families.

[Ivanov] Today a great deal is being said about reforming the Air Defense Forces. What do you think of this?

[Sinitsyn] During the postwar years, the "long-suffering" Air Defense Forces have been reorganized over 10 times. These "experiments" cost us dear. Every time we had to virtually return to the previous structure but spend many billions in so doing.

At present various alternatives for reorganization are being proposed again. One of them is to disperse the troops among other branches of Armed Forces. This option is not new, and to a great extent it repeats the reforms of 1980 which led to a sharp reduction in the Air Defense Forces groupings' possibilities and a loss of personal responsibility for carrying out set tasks. In 1986, having realized that the adopted decision was erroneous, we were forced to return to a unified air defense forces command, having spent considerable resources and lost some cadres. Despite this, it is yet again being proposed that we abolish the unified aerospace defense system. The implementation of such an option would lead to serious difficulties in the command of the air defense troops and forces, and in the organization of interbranch cooperation and the provision of backup for combat action. The air defense system that has been set up, which consists of a multitude of interdependent, genuinely unique, and very expensive systems, will disintegrate.

We have worked out an option involving proposals for the inclusion of the whole Air Defense Forces into the new branch of the Armed Forces—the Strategic Deterrent Forces—in the capacity of a defensive component for deterring aggression. Such a decision would assist in the preservation of the unified air defense system that was formed over a period of decades, and I am sure that it would prove its value in the new political conditions.

And I would like to say in conclusion that everyone who is serving in the ranks of our branch of the Armed Forces, whether they be private or general, are worried about the fate of the Air Defense Forces. The uncertainty of their present situation is creating the conditions for social tension among officers and will not assist in raising combat readiness or improving the state of military discipline.

Ministry Outlines Ethnic Structure of Military

OW0301130292 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1115 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] According to the former Soviet Defence Ministry, there are 167,000 Ukrainian servicemen in the Armed Forces today. Only 60,000 of them serve in the Ukraine. Among the military personnel serving in the Ukraine, Russians account for 44 per cent and Ukrainians—40. This information has been sent to the Russian parliament's Committee for Security.

Russians make up 52 per cent of the personnel serving in Kyrgyzstan, 50 percent in Kazakhstan, 44 per cent in Uzbekistan, 43 percent in Turkmenia and 41 per cent in Azerbaijan. The percentage of Russian servicemen is the smallest in Armenia (32 per cent). Incidentally, Armenian servicemen account for more than 32 per cent of the military personnel serving in Armenia which is the second Commonwealth state wherein servicemen of the indigenous nationality prevail. The first one is Russia,

where Russian servicemen make up more than 61 per cent of the military personnel.

Nuclear Launch Procedures Detailed

92UM0280A Moscow ARGUMENTY I FAKTY
in Russian No. 52, Dec 91 [signed to press 26 Dec 91] p 2

[Article by Lieutenant General Yu. Kardashevskiy, doctor of military sciences: "In Whose Hands is the 'War Button'?"]

[Text] First of all, what is a nuclear button? It is a code clearance and release arrangement [kodoblokirovochnoye ustroystvo] of the command and control systems of missile units and formations, and also of the systems for controlling missiles and warheads.

And so, the president does not have any kind of button. He has a written system of ciphers for the employment of various types of nuclear weapons. In the event that it is necessary, he transmits an appropriate cipher (for example, 153) to the minister of defense. He, in turn, adds his cipher (153609) and transmits it to the executors, the commanders in chief of the Navy, Air Force, Ground Forces, and the Strategic Missile Troops. And they add their ciphers (153609731, etc.), and issue these commands to the launch site which is cleared for release, and only after this can it be employed. Given our low level of command and control, 15 to 20 minutes will be spent on this.

All of these ciphers and codes are fed into an automated system, which protects against the unsanctioned employment of nuclear weapons.

But not long ago, the commander of troops of a district could quite independently give the order to employ operational-tactical and tactical weapons, inasmuch as there were no codes and ciphers directly on missiles and projectiles... But there was only an envelope with stamps in which these ciphers appeared. After receiving an appropriate telephone call, the commander was supposed then to open an envelope with the appropriate number, read the cipher, and transmit it to the executor.

Who will Get Them?

The West (most of all the United States) is uneasy about the problem of proliferation of nuclear weapons in connection with the breakup of the USSR into a number of independent states. If four independent states of the Commonwealth of Independent States have nuclear weapons, this means that the number of nuclear states in the world will increase by three. In the former USSR, all nuclear weapons were under the control of one center—Moscow. The question is this: If Kazakhstan, Ukraine, and Belarus do not intend to use nuclear weapons independently, why will they keep them on their own territory?

There is only one way out of the situation that has developed—remove (partially destroy) all nuclear weapons from the territory of these republics.

The reduction of various types of armaments, both conventional and nuclear, is a very critical question. This has to be destroyed, that does not affect stability. If there is no effect, and peace is preserved on the planet without arms, then in general all types of armaments can be destroyed. But we are not taking the latter path—that is the path of madness.

But the first path is the path of errors. It especially revealed itself in the decisions on the destruction of tactical nuclear weapons.

What is the gist of the question? Tactical nuclear weapons have a limited employment range—up to 70 kilometers. In the main, this is artillery, mortars, and tactical missiles. It is perfectly obvious that these weapons do not represent any kind of a threat to the territory of the United States. And the United States gladly support their destruction. But we find ourselves under absolutely different conditions. Neighbors can operate against us—a multi-million army, and we will not in any way defend ourselves against them with conventional weapons. Under these conditions our tactical nuclear weapons are transformed into a strategic deterrence factor. The conclusion from this is that we are defenseless without tactical nuclear weapons.

How Are You Getting Along, Army?

In a political sense, the situation in the Army at present does not give rise to any fears. The Army will not come out (independently!!!) for the purpose of conducting a military coup and seizing power.

The psychological situation is extremely negative. All of the officers and generals are disturbed by the haste with which our political leaders are withdrawing troops from the countries of Eastern Europe, being absolutely unconcerned about the social side of this process.

There are more than 200,000 families without apartments, there is a continuous reduction in the officer corps, and there is no future in the service. The prestige of service in the Army has dropped to a new low. The Army is coming apart, and the process "is speeding up." All of this creates great tension. As a great commander said: "He who does not want to feed his own army, will be feeding a foreign army."

Many different committees and groups were set up to work out the military reform. What they are "creating" cannot be evaluated. With enviable energy, they are taking the path of creating an army that is suitable only for wars of the remote past. They are again taking the position of extensive development. The principle is the same: Substitute numbers for quality.

Afghanistan has not taught us anything. The experience of the war in the Persian Gulf zone, against whose background our big mistakes were graphically displayed, is being totally ignored.

What Is To Be Done?

At the present time, three forms of the future armed forces of the Commonwealth of Independent States are being examined: unified [yedinnyye], combined [obyedinennyye], and state [gosudarstvennyye]. The most effective (both from a military and social standpoint) is the unified form.

It is probable that several members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (of course, after mutual agreement) will establish unified armed forces. The rest, after creating their state army, will enter into a military-political alliance with those that make up the unified armed forces. The combined armed forces of the Commonwealth of Independent States will come into being.

If some states do not desire to do even this, then they will resolve their own military problems independently.

What should the armed forces be like?

During the years of the Great Patriotic War and in various local wars of recent years, it was believed that the one who wins, figuratively speaking, is the one who shoots more and whose people go on the attack more. Now, this factor, while remaining extremely important, has yielded to other priorities: command and control systems on the basis of information science and automation and systems of electronic destruction and reconnaissance.

It is precisely by pursuing the new priorities that we must build our army.

Economic & Social

Fuel Shortages Ground Aircraft at 52 Airports

LD0501165592 Moscow Radio Rossii Network
in Russian 1000 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Text] The New Year has not brought much relief to the country's aviation workers, who have been suffering with considerable fuel shortages for a long time. Although the number of airports lacking aviation fuel has decreased somewhat tonight, there is no room for complacency, the flight controller at the civil aviation central control center, who was on duty, noted. Aircraft are grounded at 52 airports.

Staff Employees of Former Committee Dismissed

OW0301194892 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1802 GMT 9 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] On January 2, all employees of the IEC [Inter-Republican Economic Committee] staff have been given

notice about upcoming dismissals, IF [INTERFAX] has learned. The notice, in particular, says that their labour contracts will be cancelled in connection with the abolition of the Cabinet of Ministers of the USSR and the Inter-Republican Economic Committee. The personnel department has offered to help them with finding employment. However, in the absence of such a possibility labour contracts shall be automatically subject to cancellation in two months' time.

Trade Unions Sign Unification Convention

PM0601123992 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA
in Russian 26 Dec 91 First Edition p 1

[Report by Olga Plakhotnikova: "The Miners Are Not Accepting Money. They Are Asking for 'Black Gold'"]

[Text] The latest Independent Miners' Trade Unions Congress has concluded its work. Trade Unions from Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan signed a unification convention at the congress.

It is perfectly clear that, as soon as the population has to tighten its belt even further, the miners, sensing their strength, could become the detonator for a social explosion.

Following the miners' strikes that caused such a fuss, practically nothing has changed in these people's lives. The heartrending reports about the people who provide the country with coal may have slipped out of the newspaper pages, but they have not lost their urgency. However, society's attitude to the miners has changed: Everybody quickly cottoned on and understood that if the miners "break down," the rest of us will be unable to endure.

It seems that the governments of the Commonwealth of Independent States will have to get around the negotiating table with republic sections of the Independent Miners' Trade Union as early as January. It is interesting that the demands which the trade unions intend to put forward will be identical: At the congress they agreed to act jointly.

It is likely that representatives from Estonia and Uzbekistan will join the Independent Miners' Trade Union. They want to invite Poles, Bulgarians, and Romanians to join. Brothers from the socialist camp share common ailments with their Soviet colleagues, but there are plenty of contradictions among them. Polish miners earn \$200 each for their work. Our miners would consent to sell their labor for just \$100.

A draft model collective contract and tariff agreements were adopted at the congress. Stereotyped demands for a pay raise have not been heard here: It is as clear as day that attempts to "milk" additional quantities of worthless paper money from the state will not save the situation. Instead of this, the Independent Miners' Trade Union will be demanding that a certain proportion of miners' pay be issued in something more reliable than

the ruble—foreign currency and "black gold." This is readily accepted at exchanges and in barter deals.

Viktor Utkin, a Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic People's Deputy, has been elected president of the Independent Miners' Trade Union.

Scientific

Joint Space Research, Funds Assessed

LD0601042992 Moscow Russian Television Network
in Russian 2100 GMT 5 Jan 92

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[Summary] Republics of the Commonwealth of Independent States have agreed to carry out joint space research, but Ukraine and Moldova are in no hurry to finance space programs. According to some estimates, the money available for space research will run out this spring.

Conversion was the first serious blow to the country's space industry. "A total of 60 percent of orders received by the space industry were from the military. Last year the financing of the industry from the budget was cut by 700 million rubles." As a result, programs that have been started are not being completed and space industry enterprises are being shut down. "According to experts, this industry may completely cease to exist in three to four months. The bulk of financing for the 7-billion ruble space program is from Russia."

S. Zhukov, a member of a working group on cooperation in space, says that the most important thing at present is to set up a Russian space agency, since 80 percent of the space science and industry of the former Union is situated on Russian soil.

Tests Conducted on New 'Thermoplane' Airship

LD0401121492 Moscow TASS in English
1135 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Text] Moscow January 4 TASS—A new flying machine, called a thermoplane has been constructed by designers of the Moscow Aviation Institute, MOSKOVSKAYA PRAVDA newspaper reported today. This unusual airship, outwardly resembling a flying saucer, is intended to be used for ecologically sound highly effective technologies in the field of superblock construction, for control and remote exploration of the environment and in large scale life-saving operations.

According to experts the fuel and economic efficiency of the thermoplane will exceed that of an aeroplane by five to seven times, two to three times for an automobile, and can be compared with seagoing vessels up to 20 thousand tonnes displacement. Tests on the thermoplane are being conducted in Ulyanovsk aviation industrial complex (Volga region).

Media

Privatization of TASS News Agency Planned

OW0401035592 Tokyo KYODO in English
0036 GMT 04 Jan 92

[Text] Moscow, Jan. 4 KYODO—Executives of the former Soviet Union's official news agency TASS and officials of the Russian Government agreed Friday [3 January] to privatize the agency, the INTERFAX News Agency reported.

TASS, established in 1925, has been in financial difficulties, in part because of increased costs as Russia makes the transition to a market-oriented economy.

The news agency will retain its name for the time being and plans to raise funds by public offering of its stocks, INTERFAX said.

TASS Carries Press Review for 4 Jan

LD0401097592 Moscow TASS in English
0738 GMT 4 Jan 92

["Press Review"—TASS headline]

[Text] Moscow January 1 [date as received] TASS—The flashpoints in the former Soviet Union, where confrontation between various national and political forces is mounting, dominates mass media attention. The opposition that is waging the armed struggle against Georgian President Gamsakhurdia issued an ultimatum demand to the head of state, who is besieged in the house of government, that he surrender immediately, the newspaper SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA reports.

Georgia's opposition forces began setting up interim administrative structures. A military council was formed. It appointed former Prime Minister Tengiz Sigua as head of executive power in the republic.

Last night in South Ossetia, where the Georgian and Ossetian sides continue to be locked in confrontation, was relatively calm. PRAVDA explains temporary lull on this "front of the interethnic war" by the movement of part of Georgian militants to Tbilisi.

Meanwhile, the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh has escalated, the Army newspaper KRASNAYA ZVEZDA reports. Presidential rule was introduced in the autonomous region by the Azerbaijani president's decree.

Presidential rule was imposed in the city of Khankendi (former Stepanakert), the administrative centre of Nagorno-Karabakh, and several areas "in conjunction with the worsening of the situation in the region to ensure the coordination of activity to enhance the security of the population and restore constitutional order."

"A war that from localised armed clashes developed into veritable combat is going on in Karabakh. The interim presidential rule was imposed to re-establish constitutional order on the territories subject to aggression," the

newspaper KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA quotes the Azerbaijani president as saying.

KRASNAYA ZVEZDA writes with concern that "military men in the Transcaucasian Military District serve in unbearable conditions."

Vasiliy Belchenko, assistant to the commander of the Transcaucasian Military District, says the Army in Georgia lives and fulfills its duties in conditions of absolute lawlessness. Last year has witnessed the stealing of over 600 Army vehicles and upwards of 200 attacks on military facilities and arms depots.

Five officers and men were killed in the past week and four servicemen died in shootings. "The officers' patience is wearing thin," said Lieutenant General Yuriy Grekov, acting commander of the Transcaucasian Military District.

SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA reports a sensational news: The parliament of the Chechen Republic recalled its deputies from the Russian parliament. Among them is Russian legislature chief Ruslan Khasbulatov himself.

KRASNAYA ZVEZDA published information for readers to reflect on. It reports that about 15,000 pieces of firearms were stolen from arms depots in 1991. If a weapon hangs on a theatre stage, it should fire by all means. If a mass of uncontrolled weapons appears on the political scene, a trouble is sure to strike. Tbilisi, Nagorno-Karabakh and South Ossetia are evidence of this, the newspaper writes. Weapons, which under some circumstances assume a self-pressurising role and a spontaneous destructive force, largely make politics in these regions.

General Vladimir Lobov reflects in SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA on the country's security in the years to come. The former chief of staff thinks the reform of the Army is necessary as the Commonwealth of Independent States was formed. But it should be enacted without haste and mindful of all specifics of the situation. Otherwise, one can make a real mess of things. Lobov proposes his variant of the reform of the Armed Forces.

In the independent NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA paper, former Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze speaks about the ethnopolitical research centre formed by the foreign political association and NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA. The centre has as its goal to "attract attention, the intellectual forces and money to the solution of the problem that is assuming increasingly clearer the nature and scope of a global threat. At point are internal conflicts which cease to be an internal matter for some or other states," Shevardnadze writes.

He thinks that "having mastered the art of regulating relations among states, we have not yet found effective enough means of settling conflicts erupting within the frameworks of sovereign state entities."

NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA reports that a group of Russian people's deputies sent a letter to the Ukrainian

Supreme Soviet, expressing their concern over the move to set up Ukraine's armed forces. The deputies think the transition of the Black Sea Fleet to Ukraine's jurisdiction "violates the Alma-Ata and Minsk agreements, on which the ink has not yet dried, and creates an explosive situation."

PRAVDA Review for 6 Jan

LD0601080692 Moscow TASS in English
0733 GMT 6 Jan 92

["PRAVDA Review"—TASS headline]

[Text] Moscow January 6 TASS—Under the title "Tbilisi: A Lamentable Result of Two Weeks of Fighting" PRAVDA reports that, according to the Georgian Health and Social Insurance Ministry, 84 people have been killed and 348 wounded on both sides.

Under the heading "From the Hot Spots," Georgiy Ovcharenko reports from Tskhinval about his meeting with Znaur Gassiyev, the leader of the South Ossetian republic—a republic that has not yet been recognised by anyone. The newspaper quotes Gassiyev as saying: "We extrapolated the developments of events to the future and concluded that a future within Georgia holds out no good promises to the inhabitants of the South Ossetian Republic. Because of this our Supreme Soviet has called for unification with Russia."

"Kazakhstan: Prices Are Now Free" is the headline of an item in which PRAVDA correspondent Tleuzhan Yesilbayev reports from Alma-Ata that "family ration cards" have been introduced for permanent residents of the Kazakh capital. One card entitles a family to buy two kilos of meat, one kilo of sugar, eight eggs, 100 grams of margarine, 50 grams of tea, and 300 grams of butter per person a month. The newspaper expresses hope that rationing will facilitate a fairer distribution of food products and block outlets through which supplies were channelled to those who profited from shortages."

In order to take the country out of the crisis, not only the government but also the opposition should be given the freedom of action, PRAVDA's observer Boris Slavin says. According to him, "in any case, it is time to put an end to the anti-communist hysteria which aims to turn a

many-million-strong army of communists and their supporters into second-rate citizens." He stresses the need to integrate these people in society and warns that stabilization cannot be achieved in a country which "turns its most trained and developed members into outcasts." Slavin discusses the emergence of the left-wing movement and calls for a single bloc of left-wing parties capable of proposing a new alternative programme for pulling the country out of the crisis.

"Is the Red Army the Strongest of All?" is the title of an item by military analyst Colonel Vasilii Izgarshev, who says the present crisis in the Armed Forces is a result of the nationalist tendencies, with many republics eager to have their own armies.

Delegates to the second All-Union Conference of War, Labour, and Armed Forces Veterans, representing 50 million veterans across the former Soviet Union, raise the question of promulgating a law "on protecting veterans of war, labour and armed forces" and making this law binding on all Commonwealth member-states. They also call for developing state-sponsored programmes to ensure social protection of pensioners. Their appeal is addressed to the leaders of the independent states, including Russian President Boris Yeltsin.

A total of 84,000 students from 67 states, mostly developing countries, are now studying in 110 cities of the former Soviet Union, the president of the Russian Association of Africanists, corresponding member of the Russian Academy of Sciences Grigoriy Starushenko said in an interview published in PRAVDA. Starushenko said about 800 million rubles were earlier spent every year to train students, post-graduate students and high-skilled workers in this country. The new concept of training specialists and workers for other countries should combine the initiative of republics-states and their independent approach to admitting new students and financing their studies with coordinated activity within the Commonwealth based on a system of agreements with foreign countries.

PRAVDA's international section carries reports from Yugoslavia, Middle East, and South Korea and offers a selection of foreign press reports about the current processes in the Soviet economy as viewed from the outside.

International Affairs

Kobets Criticizes Ukrainian Decision on Army

PM0301222792 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian
4 Jan 92 Morning Edition p 2

[Viktor Litovkin report: "Politicians Have Set Army and Navy in Ukraine a Difficult Choice"]

[Text] So it has happened. The partitioning of the most cohesive and formidable structure of the former Union—its Armed Forces—of which people had spoken so much and unsuccessfully and which they had been fearing, has become a fact. As of 3 January, Ukraine placed under its jurisdiction all the troops and the Black Sea Fleet located on its territory, excluding strategic forces. Three military districts—Kiev, Carpathian, and Odessa—are to be directly subordinate to the president of Ukraine and its defense minister. Their units and combined units are to take the oath of loyalty to the Ukrainian people.

A choice is envisaged for those officers and ensigns who refuse to take such an oath anew: a transfer to serve in another country of the Commonwealth of Independent States or transfer to the reserve.

This is a tough choice. It is being spoken about by those officers who have some sort of accommodation in comparatively well-off Ukraine and who would find it very, very difficult to move to the unknown, to Russia, with their family. It is no easier for those who have no accommodation and who also find it hard to count on it in the new army. Apartments will not appear as a result of renaming units and divisions or transferring them to different jurisdiction, they sigh bitterly.

Nor, in their opinion, will concord with themselves appear. For it is not easy for every Russian, Kazakh, Uzbek, or representative of another nationality—not only an officer but also a soldier, seaman, sergeant, and petty officer—for whom Ukraine has never been a motherland, to answer to himself why people are deciding for him that he must now serve not the Union, not the Commonwealth, not a unified economic area, but a state that is alien to him.

There are already not just individual officers and ensigns but, so we were told at the Carpathian Military District Staff, entire regiments which are refusing to take the new oath. Is this not why the deadline for taking it in the Carpathian District has already been postponed from 3 until 10-15 January? Again it is not clear which units and combined units will be sworn in, for it still is not known which of them have been incorporated in the strategic forces.

We were told in the Russian leadership that units of the strategic forces in Ukraine will take a different oath, not the Ukrainian one, from 10 through 15 January.

"One thing is clear to me personally," Army General Konstantin Kobets, state adviser to the Russian president on defense questions, said in conversation with IZVESTIYA's correspondent. "The situation is at an impasse. If Russia is the Union's legal heir, then it is also the legal heir to its Armed Forces. And questions of dividing them up must be resolved not at the level of the military but at the level of statesmen. A Russian state commission must be set up and be sent to Kiev to hold talks on military questions, as is customary throughout the civilized world. To face Russia with the fact of the partition of the army and navy is not the most productive step to preserve concord."

IZVESTIYA's correspondent has learned from Russian Government circles that, because of unresolved military problems, Boris Yeltsin has postponed a planned tour of the Commonwealth countries. The leadership is working out a common position on defense questions.

The leadership of the Navy and the Black Sea Fleet is now in Kiev. Difficult talks are taking place there, too.

But for now the impression is gained that in Minsk the politicians left the Army and the Navy in the Ukraine and its officers faced with their own choice: Beneath which banners to stand?

Yeltsin Support for Georgian Opposition Denied

LD0401055192 Moscow Radio Rossii Network
in Russian 0500 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Text] The statement by Zviad Gamsakhurdia accusing the president of Russia of supporting the forces of the Georgian opposition is completely unfounded, stated Valeriy Grishin, head of the Information Department of the Russian president, to an RIA correspondent.

The spokesman was commenting on the interview given by Gamsakhurdia to the Spanish newspaper EL MUNDO. In this interview, the Georgian president claims Boris Yeltsin is showing support for the rebels.

In Grishin's opinion, by such unsubstantiated accusations Gamsakhurdia is trying to pin the guilt on the Russian leader for the fact that he himself deprived himself of the support of broad sections of the public in his own state.

Georgian Minister in Moscow for Talks

LD0301200192 Moscow Teleradiokompanii Ostankho
Television First Program Network in Russian
1900 GMT 3 Jan 92

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] Murman Omanidze, Georgian minister of foreign affairs, arrived in Moscow today, the RIA agency reports. He stayed in the besieged government house in Tbilisi. He has come to Moscow, according to RIA, to meet the Russian leadership. The aim of the talks is to put an end to the civil war in Georgia.

Turkmenistan Trade Agreement Reached for 1992

*PM0601103992 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA
in Russian 27 Dec 91 First Edition p 1*

[TASS report: "Agreement Signed"]

[Text] A. Charyyev and Ye. Gaydar, the deputy heads of the Turkmen and Russian Governments, have signed an agreement on trade and economic cooperation in 1992 between their countries.

The cooperation between the two states will take place on a mutually advantageous basis. Turkmenistan will sell gas, cotton, and other agricultural produce at contract prices to Russia as its main trading partner on the foreign market. Turkmenistan will purchase automobiles, tractors, buses, iron and items manufactured from it, textiles, and other goods from Russia.

Parliamentarians Question Lithuanian Democracy

*LD0501134992 Vilnius Radio Vilnius International
Service in Lithuanian 2200 GMT 4 Jan 92*

[Text] Some Russian parliament deputies question whether Lithuania is practicing a democratic policy. Therefore, discussions due to take place 14 January in the Russian parliament regarding ratification of the interstate agreement with Lithuania may be rather tense. Such an opinion was expressed to the Baltic News Service Agency by Vladimir Lisin, member of the Russian parliamentary work group on the ratification of treaties with the Baltic states. He added that work in this group was proceeding with great difficulty. According to Lisin, most objectionable assessments arise from questions of state borders and citizenship. In spite of this, the group is of the opinion that, regardless of certain disagreements, the Russian parliament must ratify the treaty with Lithuania. Meanwhile, Lithuania ratified the treaty with Russia shortly after its signing back in August.

UN Security Council Meeting Discussed

*LD0401145892 Moscow TASS International Service
in Russian 0154 GMT 4 Jan 92*

[By TASS correspondent Mikhail Kochetkov]

[Excerpt] UN, 4 Jan (TASS)—[passage omitted] David Hannay, this month's UN Security Council chairman, told journalists on 3 January that John Major is examining the question of holding a Security Council meeting at the summit level in the near future—the meeting will be about Russia's place in the UN Security Council as this matter has already been resolved. Yuliy Vorontsov, the Russian Federation's permanent UN representative, told journalists: Any steps to increase the Security Council's authority will be supported by my government. He said that the holding of a meeting at the summit level with a view to supporting the Security Council's authority was a good idea. The date of such a meeting

and its agenda had not yet been discussed. Yu.-M. Vorontsov said, having noted the possibility of examining such issues, as, for instance, what to do next with the reserves of nuclear weapons in the world. The Russian diplomat indicated that John Major's proposal is so far being being studied in the capitals of the member countries of the Security Council, and not at consultations at the UN.

Foreign Ministry Representative Gives Briefing

*LD0301184392 Moscow TASS in English
1819 GMT 3 Jan 92*

[By TASS diplomatic correspondents Sergey Nikishov and Aleksey Tabachnikov]

[Text] Moscow January 3 TASS—As of today, 105 states, including Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, have recognised the Russian Federation as an independent state, Vitaliy Churkin, a representative of the Russian Foreign Ministry, said at a briefing today. He stressed the fact that the Russian Federation is considered by other countries as a "state-successor to the Soviet Union".

Today the Russian Foreign Ministry appealed to foreign governments to consider the USSR diplomatic and consular representations accredited in their countries as the diplomatic and consular representations of the Russian Federation, Churkin pointed out.

The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs is preparing for the meeting of foreign ministers of member states of the Commonwealth which, in accordance with the agreement reached at the meeting of the Commonwealth countries' leaders, is scheduled to take place before January 10 in Minsk, the Russian Foreign Ministry representative said. He did not exclude the possibility of transferring the meeting to Moscow indicating that its participants plan to discuss a package of issues dealing with relations of the Commonwealth states and functioning of diplomatic and other foreign representations of the former Soviet Union.

As a co-initiator of the Mid-East peace process, the Russian Federation intends to continue active efforts on advancing negotiations between Arabs and Israel. The Russian leadership regards the bilateral talks held in Washington in December, 1991 as "yet another step toward the cardinal improvement of the Mid-East situation". It is treating the Palestine problem "with no less attention than the USSR leaders did, and will make every effort to achieve that the rights of the Palestinian people be duly observed", the Russian diplomat emphasised.

In reply to a question about the future of Russian-Cuban relations, Churkin said they will be based on the principles of "respect for the freedom of choice, non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries, equality and partnership". According to him, both sides understand the necessity to develop mutually advantageous trade and economic cooperation between the two

countries on the basis of "the world prices in the whole commodity turnover, including prices for sugar and oil". Churkin welcomed the ceasefire agreement between the Yugoslav confronting forces.

He regretted the Afghan opposition not having kept the promises to release a group of Soviet prisoners of war by January 1 this year.

On Relations With Cuba

LD0301154192 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1456 GMT 3 Jan 92

[By TASS diplomatic correspondents Sergey Nikishov and Aleksey Tabachnikov]

[Text] Moscow, 3 Jan (TASS)—The Russian Federation's leadership intends to continue to maintain that political and economic cooperation with Cuba corresponds to the interests of the two countries. This was stated today at a briefing by Vitaliy Churkin, spokesman for the Russian Foreign Ministry. He stressed that Russian-Cuban relations will be constructed on the basis of "respect for the principles of freedom of choice, noninterference in internal affairs, equality, and partnership".

The Russian Foreign Ministry spokesman reported that there is a mutual understanding of the need to develop trade and economic cooperation between the two states on a mutually advantageous basis, "using world prices in all trade, including sugar and oil". According to Vitaliy Churkin the sphere of military cooperation is being switched to a commercial basis. Talks are continuing on the withdrawal of the military training brigade from Cuba.

KGB Contacts With U.S. in Vietnam Explored

LD0401131892 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1130 GMT 4 Jan 92

[By TASS diplomatic correspondent Igor Peskov]

[Text] Moscow, 4 Jan (TASS)—Russia respects and understands the interest, care, and concern of the Americans about the fate of every U.S. citizen. This is precisely why any statements regarding their fate must be serious, verified, and based on facts, rather than suppositions. This is how Tatyana Samolis, press secretary of the director of the Russian External Intelligence Service, commented on the statement by the former USSR KGB General Oleg Kalugin on the interrogation of American prisoners of war in Vietnam by members of Soviet intelligence, which allegedly took place in 1978.

Today, in a conversation with a TASS correspondent, Tatyana Samolis noted that the question of contacts between the KGB and American prisoners of war had come up more than once. Because of this, she said, the staff of the Russian External Intelligence Service press bureau have conducted a thorough investigation into the matter.

As a result of this it has been established that in January-February 1973 there was a one-time contact between KGB employees and a U.S. prisoner of war who was suspected of belonging to the CIA. This contact was not developed because the Vietnamese side, which was supervising it, stated that that American citizen refused to have any further meetings with KGB employees. The press secretary of the head of the Russian intelligence service stressed that there is no other information regarding contacts between KGB employees and U.S. prisoners of war and interrogations carried out by the KGB in Vietnam. The question about U.S. prisoners of war was asked by TASS and ABC correspondents last September during an interview with Vadim Bakatin, KGB head at the time. He described rumors saying that employees of the Soviet intelligence service recruited U.S. servicemen in Vietnam and that some of them were actually transferred to the USSR as "an absolutely ridiculous fabrication." "I cannot believe that we might be keeping U.S. citizens, especially Vietnam war veterans," he said. "As a Soviet citizen I am convinced that it is impossible."

Soviet-U.S. Statement on Afghanistan Supported

LD0301214892 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1441 GMT 3 Jan 92

[By TASS diplomatic correspondent Vasilii Titov]

[Text] Moscow, 3 Jan (TASS)—Russia is totally in accord with the spirit and letter of the Soviet-American statement on Afghanistan, and intends to spare no effort to abide without reservations by its provisions.

This was stated today in an interview with the TASS correspondent by Andrey Fedorov, adviser to the Russian vice president for international relations, in connection with the fact that one of the main provisions of the statement on ceasing arms supplies and military equipment came into force on 1 January.

In the opinion of Andrey Fedorov, Russia has demonstrated its positive attitude toward the aforementioned statement by ceasing its supplies on 15 December last year, believing that this, among other things, would contribute to unravelling the Afghan conflict.

The adviser to the Russian vice president believes that at present an important problem is to ensure reliable monitoring of all sides, including the former union republics, complying with the statement provisions. According to Andrey Fedorov, the meeting proposed by Aleksandr Rutskoy of leaders of Russia and a number of CIS member states sharing borders with Afghanistan, will help to resolve this task. This meeting, he stated, is possible in the very near future.

Turn Over of Embassy Bugging Plans Upheld

LD0501172292

[Editorial Report] Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian at 1200 GMT on 5 January carries a two-minute report on the decision by Vadim Bakatin, head of the Interpublic Security Service, to give U.S. Ambassador Robert Strauss the plans to the bugging of the U.S. Embassy in Moscow.

Russian Foreign Minister A. Kozyrev, in an interview with Yu. Reshetnikov, says: "I would like to take this opportunity to give my support to the decision by Bakatin. I think it was politically justified and correct and really showed our new face and our readiness to clear away previous obstructions."

Reshetnikov says the Americans have been fairly restrained in their reaction to this. U.S. Senator Claiborne Pell is shown saying, in English with superimposed translation into Russian: "I think that at the present stage, thank God, we are friends and allies and this problem is no longer of the same significance which we attached to it some time ago."

Reshetnikov, standing outside the old U.S. Embassy building, concludes: "In the meantime, until the legal business is all sorted out, the American diplomats have to be content with the old fire-trap on Tchaikovsky Street."

Kozyrev, Yeltsin Study Return of Japanese Lands

OW0501070992 Tokyo KYODO in English
0647 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Text] Moscow, Jan. 5 KYODO—The Russian Foreign Ministry has begun considering a 1956 Japan-Soviet joint declaration, which stipulates the return of two northern islands to Japan, as a starting point for bilateral territorial negotiations, a senior ministry official said Sunday [5 January].

The official said a resolution to the two nations' territorial dispute will be decided through negotiation, and the use of the declaration as a starting point for negotiations does not necessarily mean the immediate and automatic return of the islands.

His remarks were in reference to comments made by Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev in late December that Russia recognizes the legality of the 1956 joint declaration.

Among other things, the declaration says the Habomai Islets and Shikotan Island will revert to Japan once a peace treaty is signed. Japan claims those islands and two others off Hokkaido, although they were occupied by the former Soviet Union in 1945.

In a 1960 memorandum, Moscow, angered by Japan's renewal of its bilateral security treaty with the U.S. during an escalation of the cold war, canceled the promise to return Shikotan and the Habomai Islets.

Since then, the former Soviet Union had maintained that there was no territorial dispute with Japan, while Japan insisted on the return of the four islands en bloc as a precondition to a peace treaty.

The official said the ministry also is considering all documents signed between the former Soviet Union and Japan after the 1956 joint declaration was signed.

The four islands off Hokkaido—Etorofu, Kunashiri, Shikotan and the Habomai Islets—were seized by the former Soviet Union in the closing days of World War II.

He pointed out it is "objectively difficult" for Russian President Boris Yeltsin to return the islands, citing public opposition, but said he thinks it possible to reach an agreement within the nation on the return of the two islands.

He emphasized, however, that it is unlikely, under the current circumstances, for Yeltsin to agree on returning all four islands.

There are tentative plans for Yeltsin and Kozyrev to visit to Japan to discuss the islands issue and other matters but no date for a visit has been set, the official said.

He also said Russia has no intention of linking the territorial issue and Japan's economic assistance to Russia.

Near East Envoys to Moscow Evaluate 1991

PM0601112692 Moscow KRSNAYA ZVEZDA
in Russian 1 Jan 92 p 2

[Report on interviews conducted by correspondent Lieutenant Colonel R. Mustafin with heads of Moscow diplomatic missions of Near East states—date of interviews not stated: "Old Year—New Year"—first two paragraphs are KRSNAYA ZVEZDA introduction]

[Text] So 1991 is behind us. The varied, contradictory, rapid, and sometimes tragic events in the Soviet Union, which ceased to exist on the eve of the New Year, pushed events in other regions of the globe into the background. And that is not surprising, because in terms of their scale and significance the changes in the former USSR have enormous influence on the fate of the whole world—East and West, North and South. However, the situation in the Near East proved no less dramatic in the past year.

What was last year like for the peoples of this still unsettled region? Which events were most important for their futures? What hopes do they have for 1992? KRSNAYA ZVEZDA correspondent Lieutenant Colonel R. Mustafin put these questions to the heads of the Moscow diplomatic missions of Near East states.

Despite the frequently diametrically opposed positions of Arabs and Israelis, the Egyptian, Israeli, Syrian, Lebanese, and Jordanian diplomats showed a rare unanimity in putting the International Conference on the Near East first among the most important events of last

year. The heads of diplomatic missions believe that the Arab-Israeli talks that began in Madrid and continued in Washington are an event of historic importance and open a new era in the Near East.

The high-ranking diplomats showed the same unanimity in naming the war in the Persian Gulf region as another important event of 1991.

Here the similarity of views between the Arabs and Israelis is probably exhausted. After that, each has his own ideas on the region's future. The Arabs, for instance, believe that the path to a lasting and just peace lies through fulfillment of UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, on the basis of the principle: "Peace in exchange for land."

Touching on the future of their host country, the former USSR, the diplomats said that they are following the developing events with great attention and at the same time some misgivings, but they hope that the peoples of the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] states will manage to make their way out of the difficult phase of economic crisis and political instability and achieve tranquillity, peace, and prosperity.

Other events were also mentioned which, in the diplomats' opinion, had great significance for their peoples.

A. al-Sayyid, ambassador of the Arab Republic of Egypt:

"The Egyptian people associate the coming year with the continued implementation of the economic reform program. This has already yielded some fruit, which encourages us. We hope that in the coming year we will be able to achieve great successes, which will lead to a significant increase in our people's prosperity, and to reach a new level of economic and social development."

A. Levin, ambassador of the State of Israel:

"I also regard as among the most important events of the year the 18 October restoration of diplomatic relations between Israel and the USSR, which were broken off in June 1967, and the adoption of the UN resolution which in effect revokes the organization's notorious and ignominious resolution equating Zionism with racism. One would hope that the reforms in your country will not be too painful for people and that you will be able to avoid excessively great economic and social difficulties, excessive unemployment, and the growth of national hatred and anti-Semitism."

M. al-Na'ib, ambassador of the Syrian Arab Republic:

"For the Syrian people an important event was the reelection of President Hafiz al-Asad for a fourth term, which testifies to the tremendous prestige he enjoys not only in Syria, but throughout the Arab world. Another event of the past year was the freeing of the Western hostages in Lebanon. As you know, Syria played a major role in their release. We hope that this problem will be fully resolved next year."

A. Mubeydin, plenipotentiary minister at the Jordanian Embassy:

"In Jordan today we are engaged in a scientific analysis of the causes of the war in the Persian Gulf region. We are doing this in order to prevent a repetition of a similar tragedy for the Arabs in future. Next year we hope for success in the talks process. Peace in our region should be one peace for all, and it should be based not on myths and traditions as to where the borders used to be, going back into the depths of time, but on today's realities."

S. Tadmuri, Lebanese ambassador:

"The process of stabilization of the situation in our country and the restoration of constitutional foundations continued in 1991. Peace came, in practice, to almost the whole territory of the country, apart from the south, which is still occupied by the Israelis. However, the progress of talks with Israel gives us hope that next year it will after all prove possible to achieve the total liberation of Southern Lebanon on the basis of UN Security Council Resolution 425. In 1992 much must be done to overcome the consequences of war in our country."

Iran, Russia Said Negotiating 'Huge Arms Deal'

PM0601125492 London SAWT AL-KUWAYT
AL-DUWALI in Arabic 3 Jan 92 p 1

[Jamal al-Muhaydah and Najah Muhammad 'Ali report: "Iran Negotiating With Russia To Purchase Mig and Sukhoi Fighters"]

[Excerpt] Abu Dhabi, Tehran—SAWT AL-KUWAYT has learned from an informed diplomatic source that negotiations are currently being held between Iran and Russia to conclude a huge arms deal. The source said that an Iranian delegation visited Moscow recently to examine the advantages of Soviet fighters, especially those whose sale was banned in the past. The source described the terms of the deal, saying that it includes the purchase of 24 Sukhoi-25's and Sukhoi-27's and 20 Mig-29's. The source said that the Russian Government has not yet responded either positively or negatively to another Iranian request for the purchase of the Mig-31 strategic fighter, possessed only by the former Soviet Air Force. The source said that Iran's acquisition of such gigantic fighters would disrupt the balance of power in the region.

The former Soviet Union's deputy aviation industry minister met with an official Iranian delegation on the sidelines of the aviation and defense exhibition in Dubai on 3 November. The meeting was also attended by Mikhail Simonov, senior designer of Sukhoi; Yegor Seleznev, general designer of airborne weapons; and General Dmitriy Malkov, Air Force chief of staff of the former USSR. [passage omitted]

Background to Rutskey Visit to Kabul Viewed

PM0301142792 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian
24 Dec 91 p 5

[Report by PRAVDA special correspondent Viktor Pritula and State Television and Radio Broadcasting Company correspondent Boris Biragov: "Afghan Break"]

[Text] Kabul, 23 Dec—The rapid events taking place in the former USSR in recent days have confronted the Kabul authorities with new political realities. The main topic of all conversations today is just what happens now? Might Russian Vice President A. Rutskey's visit here clear something up?

In Kabul they reacted oversensitively to the first round of talks with the mujahidin, and not because they are against the talks here—they are an essential component of the national reconciliation policy being pursued by Najibullah—but merely because the Republic of Afghanistan's position has been ignored in the Moscow talks as well as in Peshawar. President Najibullah mentioned this repeatedly at meetings with journalists and in his speeches to the capital's party aktiv. The essence of the president's comments is this: We are for any dialogue with all sides involved in the conflict, but only if it really is a dialogue and not the issuing of unilateral ultimatums. The current regime does not intend to resign under pressure from anybody, especially as Kabul currently controls the military-political situation virtually throughout the country.

It should be noted that not only in Kabul are the unilateral actions of the opposition belonging to the "Peshawar Alliance of the Seven" provoking criticism. Recently the eminent opposition politician Khafizula Talukani, who in Tehran heads the Afghan Council of Islamic Unity, sharply rejected the activity of the mujahidin's supreme council, which is clearly rushing to form a transitional Islamic government mainly from the political leaders of the "Peshawar Seven." Their program, Talukani stated, is not known to anybody—not to the field commanders bearing the full brunt of this bloody war, not to the unfortunate refugees whose only concern is to get a roof over their head and a crust of bread, and not to the peasants, who are engaged in difficult work. In Peshawar they obviously think that only the leaders of seven political parties are capable of assuming the burden of power in Afghanistan.

Sunday passed in utter confusion for journalists and diplomats in Kabul. The Russian vice president's visit had been fully prepared for in the Afghan capital. But the plane was late. At last it landed. Right at the airport Rutskey announces to journalists that the main achievement of his tour of southwest Asian countries is the recognition by the leaderships of Iran and Pakistan that the Afghan conflict can be resolved only by peaceful means, and from this viewpoint his peacemaking mission is passing off successfully. Furthermore, the Russian

vice president notes, a review of bilateral treaties concluded by the former Union is now taking place, and this is also one of the tour's aims. There is a proximity of positions on many questions.

The talks with Najibullah began late in the evening. What will they culminate in? An exclusive interview with Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, leader of the "intransigent opposition," about the results of the talks between Rutskey and the mujahidin was broadcast over the BBC airwaves. It can be understood from it that the Peshawar talks were not successful. The mujahidin are insisting on a complete severing of diplomatic relations between Moscow and Kabul and recognition of the fact that Najibullah's government is illegal and was foisted on the Afghan people by the Soviet occupation forces. That is, their ultimatums are even tougher than in Moscow.

Let us say this about our POW's: One POW who was in the Mojadeddi grouping was returned to Rutskey. He was brought out of Afghanistan via footpaths, which is what caused such a considerable delay to the plane departure from Islamabad.

As regards the camp of Hekmatyar himself, as of today it has 14 Soviet POW's but they do not want to return home, and even if they did they could be released only on condition that the mujahidin were given detailed information on the fate of 20,000 missing opposition members. In other words, once again it is impossible to do without the Kabul authorities here. That is possibly why the Russian vice president was so pale and restrained at Kabul airport. After all, he is just as good as the mujahidin at being indignant and issuing ultimatums, and possibly the mujahidin, especially Hekmatyar, have angered the general with their extreme impudence. But why make wild guesses? And what will Kabul say?

Afghan Envoy on Protocol, Prisoners of War

LD0601133492 Moscow TASS in English
1235 GMT 6 Jan 92

[By TASS diplomatic correspondent Vasilii Titov]

[Text] Moscow January 6 TASS—"The leadership of the Republic of Afghanistan regards the fulfilment of all the provisions of the joint Soviet-American statement on Afghanistan as an important contribution to the settlement of the Afghan armed conflict. Russia, as legal successor to the USSR, steadfastly adheres to this road," Afghan Ambassador in Moscow Mohammad Daud Razmyar told TASS in connection with the discontinuation of arms deliveries to Afghanistan as of January 1, 1992, as envisaged by the statement.

"Afghanistan," the ambassador said, "favours a cease-fire and welcomes the stopping of arms deliveries by all states to all the sides involved in the conflict. It calls for an inter-Afghan dialogue in order to settle the Afghan issue by peaceful means and urges to discuss a mechanism for overcoming the crisis. This is our strategy. If hostilities are continued and if the opposition tries to

settle the problem by peaceful means," Daud Razmyar stressed, "we will be compelled to resist in order to safeguard our independence, territorial integrity and sovereignty."

Speaking about the problem of Soviet war prisoners, held by the opposition, the ambassador stressed that it was "immoral to turn this humanitarian problem into political bargaining, as it is now being done by the mujahids. We have always approached the problem honestly and have done much to resolve it. We intend to act likewise in the future, too."

The ambassador noted that he positively assessed "the fact that certain public and political leaders in Moscow have now realised that a solution to the problem of war prisoners should be sought not in Peshawar, which prefers to seek bargains". He believes the method repeatedly suggested by Kabul was faster and more efficient—to seek such a solution in Afghanistan in contact with field commanders and with the participation and help of the Afghan Government. "We already have had such contacts," Daud Razmyar noted, "and we shall do everything possible to help settle the problem once and for all."

Trade Accord for 1992 Signed With Poland

*PM0601112592 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian
30 Dec 91 p 5*

[Anatoliy Starukhin report: "The Benefit Is Mutual. How We Intend to Trade With Poland"]

[Text] Warsaw, 29 Dec—Just before the New Year the "Protocol on Trade Relations Between Russia and the Republic of Poland in 1992" was signed here in Warsaw. In what way is this event remarkable? Above all, it is the first official document signed between the two neighboring countries after the radical state transformations which have taken place on the territory of the former USSR.

Until recently there were unbelievable delays in concluding bilateral trade agreements. Their substance was more an expression of the interests of two abstract sides than those of specific suppliers or the owners of output and the collectives which produce it. Today's protocol has clear distinctive features in this respect.

So, the Russian side commits itself to delivering to Poland 5 million tonnes of crude oil and around 8.1 billion cubic meters of natural gas. Iron ore will represent a large proportion of the raw material shipments.

In its turn Russia will receive from its western neighbor 2 million tonnes of coking coal, the same amount of foundry coal, and 500,000 tonnes of power station coal, a similar volume of sulfur, and 30,000 tonnes of soda ash. By way of payment for the raw materials the Poles will deliver 400 million dollars' worth of medicines and 1.5 billion dollars' worth of food products: meat, grain, potatoes, sugar, butter, and oil...

The goods included in approved lists will not be subject to customs duty on either side, and they will be granted simplified licensing. The barter system provides for compensation for output shipments arriving in consignments.

The advantage of this interstate deal consists also in the fact that a large number of enterprises and producers are permitted to trade duty free, keeping for themselves the main bulk of their hard currency revenue.

Government Welcomes Yugoslav Cease-Fire

*LD0401213892 Belgrade TANJUG in English
1753 GMT 4 Jan 92*

[Text] Moscow, January 4 (TANJUG)—Russia has welcomed the agreement on an absolute ceasefire, signed in Sarajevo, a Russian Foreign Ministry spokesman told TANJUG on Saturday [4 January].

The spokesman expressed hope that the 15th ceasefire would be observed and that it would open door to peaceful dealing with the Yugoslav crisis, and assessed highly the role of Cyrus Vance and the United Nations.

The daily IZVESTIYA today also positively assessed Vance's latest mission, voicing optimism in view of the possibility of a solid ceasefire and, consequently, of an early arrival of blue helmets in Yugoslavia.

The daily assesses that the latest ceasefire has raised hopes throughout the "former Yugoslav federation."

Labor Minister in Germany for Business Talks

*LD0601012592 Moscow TASS in English
2043 GMT 5 Jan 92*

[By TASS correspondent Mikhail Stepovik]

[Text] Bonn January 5 TASS—Aleksandr Shokhin, Russian minister of labour and employment and deputy head of the Russian Government in charge of social policy, arrived in Germany today for a three-day visit.

During his stay in Bonn, Shokhin will hold talks with senior executives of the German Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, will meet representatives of business circles and trade unions. He will also visit Munich, where he will study Bavaria's experience in tackling social problems and problems that deal with providing the population with employment.

Mishandling of German Food Aid Reported

*LD0601131692 Hamburg DPA in German
1056 GMT 6 Jan 92*

[Excerpts] St. Petersburg/Hamburg (DPA)—There are more and more indications that food aid sent to Russia is disappearing into obscure channels and that distribution problems are commonplace. The North German Broadcasting corporation (NDR) reports from St. Petersburg today that the city is hardly providing any support at all to distributing the food aid. Of the 80,000 parcels

donated by Hamburg citizens, only 10,000 have been distributed so far. Some 30,000 parcels are still being stored in containers in the city's port, the NDR reports. Another 40,000 have disappeared. Pavel Soloyanov, the city's deputy mayor, admitted that some of the parcels have been lost.

Bernt Edelhoff, of the German Red Cross (DRK), told DPA in Hamburg: "St. Petersburg's infrastructure is not at all adequate for the distribution of thousands of parcels." [passage omitted]

Commenting on the whereabouts of the 40,000 parcels which have disappeared, well-known politician Aleksander Rodin states that the majority of them have probably ended up as military reserves rather than reaching those in need.

Sweden To Increase Aid to St. Petersburg

LD0501120992 Moscow TASS International Service
in Russian 2000 GMT 4 Jan 92

[By TASS correspondent Nikolay Kondratenko]

[Text] St. Petersburg, 4 Jan (TASS)—Swedish Foreign Trade Minister Ulf Dinkelspiel said here today that his government intends to double or even triple its assistance to the countries of Eastern Europe. Thirty million dollars has already been allocated for this purpose. Most of it will go to the countries which are close to Sweden and to St. Petersburg. Food will reach the city on the Neva in the course of the next few months within the framework of a humanitarian aid program.

The minister, who arrived in St. Petersburg for the official opening of the Grand Hotel "Yevropa," was today received by the city's Mayor Anatoliy Sobchak. The mayor stated that matters should not be confined merely to food supplies, but that it would also be advisable to take advantage of Sweden's experience in the organization of milling stations to provide private farmers with equipment, and also in creating farms on the Swedish model for agriculture. The guest said that the hotel, constructed in part by firms from his country, may serve as a symbol of successful bilateral cooperation. The Swedish side is ready to continue cooperation and the reconstruction of the building of the former Swedish Embassy on the Neva embankment may become a new joint project. Part of its premises, the minister believes, could be occupied by the general consulate and the rest by private firms.

Finnish Red Cross Aid to Russia Reported

92UF0407A Moscow PRAVDA in Russian
31 Dec 91 p 5

[Report by PRAVDA special correspondent Aleksey Boldinyuk: "New Destination for Aid"]

[Text] Helsinki, 30 December—Two thousand tons of food—a gift from Finland—will soon be distributed among the residents of the Kola Peninsula, Kareliya, and St. Petersburg.

The total value of food aid being sent to us through the Finnish Red Cross, is 30 million markkas, or more than \$7 million. This is exactly one-third of the total amount the Red Cross has for use as aid to foreign countries this year. In the past, food, medications, and tents have been sent to Asian and African countries affected by natural disasters. What kind of hurricane has swept over Russia to place it among the crisis regions?

Markku Niskala, secretary general of the Finnish Red Cross, says that during a 1990 visit to northern Russian regions his staff did not see a need for urgent humanitarian aid at that time. This winter the situation is different: A huge number of elderly people, disabled, and families with many children need food, while hospitals are experiencing catastrophic shortages of medications. Together with representatives of local authorities, the Finns made lists of those most acutely in need, and determined specific addresses where aid is to be delivered. The first vehicles with cargo from the Red Cross warehouses have already taken off for the border zone area.

Government Plans Oil, Sugar Exchange With Cuba

OW0401004392 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1930 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] To supply the sugar industry in Russia with source materials for sugar production, and the population, with sugar, the Russian Government decided to export 1.5 mn. tons of oil, 400,000 tons of diesel fuel and 300,000 tons of boiler oil in January and February.

Russia plans to procure 1 mn. metric tons of raw sugar. The deal will be negotiated with Cuban foreign trade agencies, and the oil will be bartered on the basis of current world prices. If Cuba declines the deal, Russia will go to the markets of a third country or countries.

Human Rights Group on Cuban 'Reprisals'

OW0401135892 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1115 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Russian Committee for the Defence of Human Rights in Cuba has demanded that political reprisals in that country be stopped and that all of the Cuban political prisoners be freed.

The Committee's statement, passed to IF [INTERFAX], urges Fidel Castro to let an international commission of human-rights experts into Cuba.

Federation Affairs

Yeltsin Decree on Constituent Republic Budgets

PM0601133192 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA
in Russian 26 Dec 91 First Edition p 1

[Decree of RSFSR President "On the Financing of State Expenditure From RSFSR Budgets in the First Quarter of 1992," dated Moscow, the Kremlin, 19 December 1991 and signed by RSFSR President B. Yeltsin]

[Text] In order to ensure the uninterrupted financing of state expenditure from the RSFSR republic budget, the republic budgets of the constituent republics of the RSFSR, and the budgets of national-state and administrative-territorial formations until the adoption of the RSFSR Law "On the RSFSR Budget System for the First Quarter of 1992," I resolve:

1. That the following be included in the republic budgets of the constituent republics of the RSFSR and the budgets of national-state and administrative-territorial formations for the first quarter of 1992:

A value-added tax at 20 percent of the total tax received;

A tax on profits earned by enterprises, associations, and organizations based on a tax rate of 15 percent;

Duties (excluding duties on liquor, vodka, and cars).

2. That the RSFSR Ministry of Economics and Finances be allowed in the first quarter of 1992 to undertake the financing of measures and institutions funded from the RSFSR republic budget in line with the RSFSR Law of 10 October 1991 "On the Bases of the Budget System and the Budget Process in the RSFSR," taking into account expenditure on implementing the decisions of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet and the RSFSR Government on measures to provide social protection for the population in 1992.

[Signed] RSFSR President B. Yeltsin

[Dated] Moscow, The Kremlin, 19 December 1991

Moscow Press Views Price Liberalization

LD0301155292 Moscow TASS in English
1524 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Text] Moscow January 3 TASS—Most Moscow newspapers today lead with items on price liberalization which began in Russia and most other republics of the former Soviet Union on January 2.

Entire pages are given to rows of figures denoting new prices for goods and services.

The leading trade union newspaper, TRUD, reports that on Thursday [2 January], shops in Moscow's central thoroughfare—Tverskaya Street—were selling white bread at 2.1 roubles a loaf, sausage at 88.75 a kilo, cheese at 21 roubles per 100 grams, vodka at 49 roubles a bottle.

Milk, listed with the few products for which prices are fixed by the state, sold for 1.60 per 0.5 litre.

Last December, the Russian Parliament fixed the minimum monthly income at 342 roubles per person.

RABOCHAYA GAZETA, which calls itself an independent newspaper for social protection, quotes prices in other Russian cities:

St. Petersburg: milk - 6 roubles per litre, brown bread—1.32 a kilo.

Krasnoyarsk (Siberia): white bread - 3.6 roubles a loaf, milk - 2.5 roubles a litre.

Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky (Kamchatka)—sour cream - 153 roubles per kilo, butter - 50 roubles a kilo. For a ride in a taxi, one has to pay 6 roubles flat down and 3 roubles per kilometer.

At Moscow's central market, the newspaper says, mutton sold for 200 roubles a kilo. Beef for 250 roubles a kilo, milk for 33 to 50 roubles a litre.

Newspapers report that despite exorbitant prices, many essential food products are not available at all or sold out quickly.

The press says the distribution network is not ready to trade at free prices. SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA, formerly a Russian Communist newspaper, reports that although bread was delivered to shops in south-west Moscow on January 2, shop attendants would not sell it, as new prices had not been officially announced. The newspaper refrained from drawing far-reaching conclusions from the first impressions. "The new year holidays are over, and enterprises have resumed work. Shops will have things to offer within a week or two. Trading will get under way. After all, wages have risen two-to-three times," the newspaper says.

PRAVDA says inhabitants of Tula, a city 200 kilometers south of Moscow, felt "tempered enough" to face the new price jump: many families have long done without the main course in their dinners and have long since forgotten the taste of butter.

In Barnaul (southern Siberia), shops look deserted, PRAVDA reports. Despite the price rise, their shelves are as empty as before.

Pensioners and families with many children are the worst hit by soaring prices. In some regions of Russia, authorities have taken steps to protect the needy. In Saratov region, soup kitchens have been set up, PRAVDA reports.

SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA points out that President Boris Yeltsin, Vice-Premier Yegor Gaydar and other members of the Russian Government have shouldered immense responsibility and warns that the shock therapist should be aware they have come dangerously close to the upper limit of sensitivity.

Ukraine also introduced free prices and rates on September [as received] 2. TRUD reports Ukraine imposed coefficients to restrain price increases for consumer goods and services. Prices for bread, milk, kefir (a sort of yoghurt), lean margarine, animal fats, vegetable oil, cereals and baby food may not be raised more than three times above the January 1 level, the newspaper says.

In Belarus, desperate attempts have been made to constrain the prices for bread, milk and meat. The state will pay subsidies to maintain prices for a number of goods and services after the prices jump on January 3. Listed among products with subsidized prices are sugar, electricity and hot water, fuel sold to individuals, communal services, city transport fares and medicines.

Moscow economist Vasilii Selyunin toured shops with journalists on Thursday. He said in an interview with TRUD that "there is no ground for panic". Free prices should be backed by a "commodity invasion", he said.

A group of Russian Parliament members disagreed with the economist. They called price liberalization "yet another experiment" pushing the peoples of Russia towards "poverty, chaos and anarchy". Sergey Baburin and three other members of parliament signed a letter charging the Russian Government and the ruling majority in the Russian Parliament with "political and economic adventurism". According to the letter, the policy pursued by them "will not only hamper the necessary reforms but cause the crisis to deepen".

Reactions to Price Liberalization Assessed

LD0501225892 Moscow TASS International Service
in Russian 1924 GMT 4 Jan 92

[By TASS correspondent Nikita Marunov]

[Text] Moscow, 4 Jan (TASS)—With the freeing of prices it looks as though the process of their formation has only just begun. Reports from various towns of the country show that a random search for the right price level, at which the consumer still has the capability to buy, is underway.

The inhabitants of Arkhangelsk have been pleasantly surprised by the fact that food prices at markets are still at the same level. At the same times there remains a fear that this will not last for long. The general rise in the cost of living increases the costs of agricultural producers, who will inevitably make up for their losses at the expense of the consumers. The sellers from the southern regions can already be counted on the fingers on two hands: it looks as though high transport tariffs are the reason for this.

The same picture can be found in Rostov-on-Don: the number of sellers is almost higher than that of the consumers. Yet prices have rocketed there. At the same time many shops are closed for stock-taking. People

queue as usual for bread, whereas milk tanks from the city dairy combine stand "unmilked" because of high prices.

The food prices have risen approximately by the same level in the state trading system and in the markets of Penza. They have risen three- or four-fold. Meat has vanished from cooperative trade. It is mainly vegetables that are being sold. The rest of the food is being repriced.

The rise in prices, which has been aggravated by the discrepancy between supply and demand, quite often hits at the seller. One of the largest shops in Yaroslavl has sold up to 10 times less sour cream than usual—just four kilograms at freed prices.

Dairy product prices which have risen more than 20-fold (!) are beyond the reach of the consumer. The price on any product can be brought down by cutting the costs of a given enterprise, the price markup, and the purchasing prices. Otherwise it will be necessary to reduce the production of sour cream.

As we can see the rise in prices sometimes creates a paradoxical situation, whereby products that are already scarce are left on the shop shelves to rot and production levels are forced down.

Barnaul still lacks many products. Yet it is impossible to find out their future prices because many producers have only just started concluding agreements on deliveries, counting up their costs and setting acceptable profitability levels. The private producers are waiting in the wings, and therefore the markets are empty. So it is possible that the real "shock therapy" is still to come.

Television Reviews Prices for Basic Foodstuffs

LD0601041892 Moscow Teleradiokompanii Ostankino
Television First Program Network in Russian
1645 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Report by T. Mitkova from the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] The uncontrolled rise in prices is putting Russians in a gloomy mood, writes the U.S. newspaper THE WASHINGTON POST. Yes, our mood indeed leaves a lot to be desired, but all the same the reforms have at last begun, although figures give a contradictory impression.

What do things cost in the Russian Federation? In Moscow, a loaf of white bread now costs a minimum of 1.68 rubles, one kilogram of beef between 21 to 50 rubles, and 10 eggs 12 rubles. In St. Petersburg, a loaf of bread costs 1.50 rubles, one kilogram of beef 72 rubles, and a bottle of vodka 45 rubles. In Krasnoyarsk, the price of bread has risen to 3.65 rubles, one kilogram of beef to 75 rubles, and a litre of wine costs 28 rubles [figures on screen give this last figure as 27.90 rubles]. In Yekaterinburg, a loaf of bread now costs 3.65 rubles, beef 48 rubles, and milk 1.50 rubles per litre. Sour cream is being sold in Arkhangelsk at 60 rubles per kilogram. In Kemerovo, a loaf of bread costs 1.56 rubles, less than in

Moscow, sour cream costs 75 rubles, and cottage cheese costs 41 rubles per kilogram. Residents of Samara now pay 1.50 rubles per litre of milk, 6 rubles per kilogram of sour cream, and 12 rubles for 10 eggs.

Statistics Show Steady Decline in Food Supplies

OW0501212992 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1948 GMT 5 Jan 92

[From the 6 January "Soviet Business Report"; transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] In the Closing Months of 1991 Supplies of Food to Russia's Population Again Contracted

Added to shortages of meat products, sugar and vegetable oil, a serious deficit of milk products, eggs, cereals and bread developed. Foodstuffs reaching the market between January and November of 1991 were 9% down on the corresponding period of 1990, according to data supplied by Russia's State Committee for Statistics. Furthermore, there was an especially sharp drop in food supplies reaching industrial centres such as Moscow and Yekaterinburg, which depend on centralized reserves.

A survey of 49,000 families conducted by the State Committee for Statistics revealed that consumption of meat, meat products and butter in 1991 was down by 8-9%, of confectionery products—by over 10%, and of butter—by 5%. Consumption of more easily available and less expensive foods—such as potatoes and bread—increased.

At comparable prices, total turnover in trade during 1991 was down by 7%, as compared with 1990. As concerns foodstuffs, production between January and November was down by 8% as compared with the corresponding period of 1990. The cut back was particularly severe (18%) for sugar, while production of meat, butter and cheese dropped by 13-15%.

Despite the imposition of a rationing system on the sale of most products, many people are unable to buy even the above-listed quantity of such commodities in the state shops.

Farms Continue To Cut Back on Sales of Basic Foodstuffs to Centralized Reserves

Although the vast majority of Russia's population depends on supplies coming from government-organized reserves, stocks have sharply dwindled. In 1990, for instance, state purchases of grain from kolkhozes [collective farms] and sovkhozes [state farms] amounted to only 22.3 million tons—a record low for the past 25 years. In comparison with last year the sale of Durham wheat dropped especially sharply—by 15%-50%, depending on the type.

In 1991, state purchases of livestock products were the lowest for the past five years, having contracted since [date indistinct] by 16%.

Output by State-Owned Farms Between January and November 1991

	Livestock, Fowl (million tons)	As percentage of 1990	Milk (million tons)	As percentage of 1990
1987	9.5	106	39.6	102
1988	9.9	105	41.0	103
1989	10.3	103	42.0	102
1990	10.2	99	41.9	99.7
1991	8.8	87	37.6	90

A shortage of fodder (reserves are already 18% less than 1990's) has led to a drop in the number of cattle it was reduced by 7%. [sentence as received] Milk yield also decreased by 7% in 1991.

Burbulis Defends Price Liberalization Policy

LD0401144892 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 0900 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Text] Gennadiy Burbulis, Russian first deputy prime minister, has stated that price liberalization is not a whim of Boris Yeltsin and those who are currently in power, but is a vital necessity. The measure would make an impact if the vast majority of Russians became involved in reform, he said in an interview with the weekly ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI. Gennadiy Burbulis acknowledged that the raising of prices might give rise to dissatisfaction among people and even resistance from them, especially since the reforms had outspoken opponents who would try to exploit the situation. The government, he continued, had a considered program of social protection for the most vulnerable strata of the population. At the same time, we are ready for untraditional ways of maintaining public order, the first deputy head of the Russian Government said.

Trade Ministry Official Holds News Conference

Grain Shortage Noted

LD0401143592 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1235 GMT 4 Jan 92

[By TASS correspondent Ivan Ivanov]

[Text] Moscow, 4 Jan (TASS)—At present the Russian state resources are short of about 30 million tons of grain, said Leonid Cheshinskiy, head of the committee for bakery goods of the Ministry of Trade and Material Resources, at a news conference. It was held today in the press center of the Russian government. According to him, the republic's state resources hold 22.5 million tons of grain, whereas, according to estimates, demand is for 52 million tons. This is connected with the fact that a number of areas are holding back their own grain. Leonid Cheshinskiy noted that contracts have been concluded for the supply of 9 million tons of grain from the U.S., 4 million tons of grain from Canada, and also 3 million tons from European countries. "In the future, we

will be purchasing grain from countries where the state of the market is convenient for us, provided there are additional credit facilities," he said. According to Leonid Cheshinskiy, grain purchases, especially in the U.S. and Canada, are complicated by the shortage of foreign currency which is needed to pay for transportation of the freight by sea. In the very near future, the Russian foreign currency debt for freight transportation may reach 150 million dollars. Regarding the purchase of grain from the former union republics, Leonid Cheshinskiy said Kazakhstan alone used to supply Russia with approximately 4 million tons of grain a year. He stressed, for instance, that allegations to the effect that "the Ukraine was feeding Russia" are not quite correct. In reply to the question about delays in bread deliveries to Moscow, Cheshinskiy said that currently Moscow has a three month reserve of flour, and St. Petersburg has enough for another six weeks. All in all Russia has a four month reserve of grain for production of flour and bread. In the course of the news conference, Cheshinskiy spoke in favor of the need for tough regulation both of wholesale grain prices and retail prices for bread and bakery products.

Bread Available; Food Short

OW0401163892 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1441 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Chairman of the Russian Federation's Committee for Bakery Products, Mr. Leonid Cheshinskiy, announced at a press conference on Saturday [4 January], that the available amount of grain was sufficient for ensuring uninterrupted bread supplies to Moscow and to Petersburg, if, he said, panic-buying stopped. Moscow's reserve of grain will last for three months and St. Petersburg's—for six weeks.

Food will still be in short supply in January and February, he said. The shortage of sugar, dairy products, vegetable oil and dry milk will be felt the worst.

Even following January price rises, prices on bread remain very low, said Mr. Cheshinskiy. Bread is still used as fodder, the more so since mixed fodder is in short supply, all of which may cause the head of livestock and the production of meat and milk to go down. "If at least 6 million tons of mixed fodder were made available, the consumption of bread would diminish by at least 3 million tons," said Mr. Cheshinskiy. The annual production of bread in Russia exceeds 18 million tons.

Mr. Cheshinskiy said that the government had made additional allocations to grain imports. It has already concluded contracts for importing 9 million tons of grain from the U.S., 4 million tons from Canada, 1.5 million tons by an EEC credit, and 1.5 million tons from Germany. The government has reserved 300 million dollars for purchasing grain from individual farmers, and from state and collective farms, but only 100 million

dollars have been spent so far. "They don't believe that we'll pay hard currency for their grain," said Mr. Cheshinskiy.

Further on Shortages

LD0601050292 Moscow Mayak Radio Network
in Russian 0230 GMT 6 Jan 92

[Text] What products can we count on this winter? Faced with the threat of famine, which frightens us all constantly, we think first of bread. Correspondent Vera Shchelkunova was at a meeting with the chairman of the committee of grain products of the Russian Federation.

[Begin recording] [Shchelkunova] Do not expect me to speak about prices, because although the Russian state intends to hold the price of bread to double or triple, it is unlikely that it will succeed. At issue are the most essential products of bread and groats. Usually, the bread products committee annually produced 18.5 million tonnes of flour. There was enough for bread and pies, and there was some left over as well. But there was not enough last year and there will not be enough this year either. More and more bread is being demanded. No matter how expensive it becomes, it will still be fed to cattle as long as there is no fodder. The grain products committee of Russia, lacking the production capacity for milling more flour, bought an additional million tonnes just to be on the safe side. Probably things will be fine as far as bread goes. But what about groats? Leonid Stepanovich Cheshinskiy, chairman of the Russian grain products committee, comments:

[Cheshinskiy] You recall that groats have always been on our shelves, except of course for certain kinds such as buckwheat. We have never produced enough buckwheat. We generally make 250,000 tonnes of buckwheat, but the demand exceeds 300,000 tonnes. This year, we procured very little buckwheat—just 105,000 tonnes.

As for legumes, there are serious complications. This year peas and other legumes also face a serious situation. We have evidently not procured enough; therefore, we will have very few legumes—around 50 percent of the norm.

Millet is also a purely traditional Russian crop. We have procured just 800,000 tonnes, but our minimum requirement is 900,000 tonnes. Evidently we will not have enough millet.

I am naming those crops that are traditional for Russia and for which the opportunity to buy them abroad simply does not exist. It simply does not exist. All the rest we procured partially independently and partially.... [changes thought] That is speaking of barley. As for oats, we are now buying additional oats. We will have all other types of groats. On the whole, there will be fewer groats. We will fill the gap about which I have spoken to you by processing hard varieties of wheat into wheat groats. I appreciate that this is nothing to shout about, as they say,

but there is no other way. These unpopular types of groats have to be used in order to increase the overall volume of groats.

As far as rice is concerned, the harvest was somewhat less than we expected. There will be a bit less rice. We will meet requirements from old reserves.

[Shchelkunova] In principle, these are simple statements of fact. I asked Minister Cheshinksiy about himself and his department, and whether he is guilty of anything. Leonid Stepanovich said "yes," he is guilty of not being insistent or efficient enough. For instance, peasants do not want to sell products for money or for the goods they are offered. Therefore, he should insist that they be given the Volgas or trucks that they seek. The sale of products for hard currency did not get underway in good time, either. Not everyone can go to the Foreign Economic Bank. Now banks in many oblast centers have the right to pay hard currency for products, but not all peasants know that. That is another lesson for the future. [end recording]

Ruble-Dollar Parity Plan Offers 'Salvation'

PM0601125692 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian
4 Jan 92 Morning Edition p 1

[Aleksandr Shalnev report: "Another Plan To 'Rescue Russia'"]

[Text] New York—The Russian Government is examining another U.S.-originated plan for the economic and financial salvation of Russia. A plan which differs radically from the one that came into force 2 January and which could come into force if the liberalization idea does not justify itself.

According to American sources which have the opportunity for close contact with Moscow's White House, Deputy Prime Minister Yegor Gaydar is allowing himself only a few weeks to come to a conclusion as to whether or not liberalization is working. If not, then, these sources indicate, Russia can expect another experiment.

The essence of the plan, which was drawn up by a group of researchers headed by J. Wanniski, president of the Policonomics corporation, is set forth in eight pages that have already been sent to Moscow and have now been made available to me. The main idea is that instead of allowing the ruble to "float" at its own level in the illusory hope that it will eventually stabilize at some kind of acceptable level, the ruble should be tied to gold through the issuing of a gold bond, and its rate in relation to the dollar should be set at one to one.

The population's confidence in what the government is going to do is the whole key to the success of the entire enterprise. In the view of the plan's authors confidence can be ensured through the solemn assurance that the debt will be repaid to the people by the government, which, if things reach that point, should use all the resources available to the state to cover its debts to the

population. And those resources are vast. The value of land, minerals, factories, and so forth is estimated by the plan's authors at \$6 trillion at least. Personal savings, with which gold bonds will be purchased, are equal to only 600 billion rubles. In J. Wanniski's view, "that is a mere trifle."

Wanniski, with whom I had a long talk, sees the main advantage of his plan in the fact that "paramount importance is attached to the interests of domestic, not foreign, creditors, that is, the interests of Russian people with their relatively miserly savings, rather than foreign banks that gave credits to the former Union."

Wanniski says that the personal savings that people have accumulated over many years cannot be allowed to turn to dust overnight. But that, he believes, is what will happen with a floating ruble.

A gold bond, the ruble equal to the dollar—is this not all mere fantasy? Wanniski, well aware of the skepticism that could greet his plan, reminds us of a historical fact. In 1791, when America was suffering a severe financial crisis, Alexander Hamilton, the then minister of finance, proclaimed that the government would pay off all its debts in gold, although at the time there was virtually no gold in the treasury. The crisis was overcome.

The situation in Russia today is far more complex than in America two centuries ago. And in the view of the plan's authors that is why the implementation of these apparently fantastic measures should also involve Western creditors, who, in particular, would be able to accept gold bonds in payment of interest on their loans to Russia. And the United States would agree to accept these bonds to extinguish all the debts of the former Union accumulated under land lease—on the order of \$3 trillion.

As the text of the plan notes, dollar-ruble parity and the transfer of the ruble to a gold basis will lead rapidly, in a matter of hours, to the reappearance of long-absent goods in the stores. People who have been systematically buying up and stockpiling everything they could lay their hands on in order to get rid of their rubles in expectation of a further devaluation, will abandon this practice. It will be more to their advantage to get rid of some of their stockpiled goods in order to obtain rubles, which are going up in value.

I am no economist and cannot form an authoritative opinion of the merits and shortcomings of this plan, but I cannot help noting that the idea of tying the ruble to gold is not new. It was put forward earlier, in particular by highly authoritative finance experts like Wayne Angell, director of the Federal Reserve System. After visiting Moscow two years ago, he concluded that the transformation of the ruble into convertible currency should precede, rather than follow, the switch to a market economy.

Gaydar Denies Alternative Plan

*LD0401142892 Moscow TASS in English 1340 GMT
4 Jan 92*

[Text] Moscow January 4 TASS—The Russian Government has no alternative plan if the introduction of free market prices brings no result, Russian Deputy Prime Minister Yegor Gaydar told TASS on Saturday [4 January].

The IZVESTIYA newspaper hinted, quoting anonymous "U.S. sources", that a new alternative experiment is in store for Russia. The plan, designed by a group of U.S. researchers, envisages the issue of a "gold bond" to make the rouble exchangeable at a one-to-one rate to the U.S. dollar.

The Russian Government is interested in all promising ideas and proposals wherever they come from, Gaydar admitted, but said the government is sticking to "the orthodox" decisions worked out jointly with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. "We do not believe that Russia needs new experiments, he said. Besides, the alternative proposal was based on the presumption that Russian gold reserves are 10-15 times higher than they are in reality at present, Gaydar explained. [quotation marks as recieved]

Cash Shortage Amounts to 10 Billion Rubles

*LD0401151492 Moscow Radio Rossii Network
in Russian 0900 GMT 4 Jan 92*

[Text] Since the beginning of January, Russia's cash shortage amounts to 10 billion rubles. Journalists were told this by Zinchenko, director of the main administration for adjusting the money circulation of the Russian Federation's Central Bank. In his view, if, following the sharp rise in prices, enterprises start to raise wages just as sharply, the cash shortage will increase still further. As is known, in trying to remedy the situation some regions of Russia have already issued 500 rouble notes. At the end of March or beginning of April, it is planned to issue 1,000 rouble notes.

New Russian Ruble Exchange Rates Set

*PM0301141192 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian
31 Dec 91 Union Edition p 1*

[Report from roundup of IZVESTIYA, TASS, RIA, REUTER, AP, and UPI reports: "Russian Central Bank Sets Ruble's Market Rate"]

[Text] In connection with the adoption of the Russian president's decree "On the Formation of the Russian Federation Republican Currency Reserve in 1992," the Russian Central Bank reports that a new system is being introduced for determining the ruble's exchange rate against foreign currencies.

As of 1 January 1992 the Russian Central Bank is establishing a market exchange rate for the ruble whereby it will buy and sell foreign currency on the

domestic market at the rate of 110 rubles for one U.S. dollar. For accounts between the state budget and exporting enterprises when selling part of their export profits to the Russian Federation republican currency reserve, a special commercial rate will be used as of 1 January—55 rubles for one U.S. dollar.

Resolution on Deliveries to CIS Circulated

*LD0301205792 Moscow TASS in English 1957 GMT
3 Jan 92*

[Text] Moscow January 3 TASS—The Russian Government today circulated its resolution of December 29, 1991, on the procedure of delivery in 1992 of specific types of products and goods from Russia to the Commonwealth member-states.

Sources at the Russian Government told TASS the resolution was prompted by the legal vacuum that appeared in economic relations and bilateral economic agreements after the former Soviet republics became independent states.

The preservation of the single economic space and regulation of mutual deliveries requires maximum attention to the interests of the domestic market.

While mechanisms of economic cooperation between Russia and the Commonwealth member-states are being adjusted, each enterprise should know how and at what prices to deliver products to partners and what is the procedure for receiving licenses on goods export. The resolution creates a legal basis for these activities.

The resolution says, quotas on exports of licensed goods are established by the Russian Ministry of the Economy and Finance and the Ministry of Trade and Material Resources on the range of production and technical items and consumer goods envisaged by corresponding supplements.

Other products are sold by suppliers independently in accordance with conditions of their treaties with buyers.

Republican and territorial wholesale-mediating organizations of the Ministry of Trade and Material Resources grant suppliers licenses on goods exports, which are the basis for concluding the treaties.

The Russian Ministry of Transport has been instructed to establish control over transport organizations so that only licensed goods were accepted for transportation. The Interior Ministry has been instructed to examine transportation vehicles if necessary, in order to prevent the violation of the goods exports procedure.

The detained goods will be passed over to territorial wholesale-mediating and trade organizations to be sold at the internal market, and the proceeds will go to the republican budget and the local budget in equal shares.

State, Collective Farms To Be Eliminated*OW0401141292 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1115 GMT 4 Jan 92*

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] According to the Russian government's decision, all state and collective farms will be eliminated before January 1, 1993. Pending this, state and collective farms will be reorganized into joint-stock societies, associations or cooperatives, depending on the farmers' wish, or divided into individual farms.

State and collective farmers will receive a share of their farms' property and land, for free, in accordance with their labour input. The owner of a plot of land and property can run a farm of his own, or use it as a contribution to his joint-stock society or association, or sell it to other farmers partially or completely.

The state and collective farms which have no money to pay their debts back, will be declared bankrupt, eliminated and reorganized before April 1992. One tenth of the more than 25,000 Russian state and collective farm are working at a loss.

Savings Bank Introduces Higher Interest Rates*LD0501153692 Moscow Mayak Radio Network
in Russian 1300 GMT 5 Jan 92*

[Text] Usually at 1500, Mayak carries rural news, but I will start this bulletin with a report on new rates of interest on the population's deposits in Russia's Savings Banks [Sberbank]. This report was received via the channels of TASS.

Interest rates on the population's deposits have risen somewhat. Pavel (?Zhikharev), president of Russia's Savings Bank, told TASS that on average rates increased 1.6 times. The interest rate on deposits repayable on demand has increased from 2 to 3 percent; interest on time deposits of more than one year, from 5 to 7 percent; deposits for more than 3 years, to 10 percent; deposits for more than 5 years, from 9 to 15 percent.

The same also applies to special deposits: if deposited for 5 years, 15 percent of annual interest is given; if deposited for less, 7 percent.

It is believed that in the current unstable situation, indexation of income from deposits is justified on one condition, the president of Russia's Saving Bank remarked: payments must be made from the revenue of the Savings Bank. However, funds earned last year by the Savings Bank do not make it possible to implement indexation and introduce higher interest rates.

Government Switches Rest Day 4-6 Jan*PM0301140592 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA
PRAVDA in Russian 3 Jan 92 p 2*

[TASS report: "Giving Our Shock Labor on Saturday"]

[Text] By decision of the Russian Government, the rest day this year is switched in the Russian Federation from Saturday 4 January to Monday 6 January. Work on that day may be compensated for either by granting another day off or by paying double remuneration. If a worker so wishes, that day may be joined to the next leave day. The resolution is signed by Gennadiy Burbulis, first deputy chairman of the Russian Government.

Non-Christian Holidays May Be Official*OW0501005092 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1492 GMT 4 Jan 92*

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The fact that January 7 was proclaimed a day off did not mean that the Russian Orthodox Christmas would be a national holiday, an IF [INTERFAX] correspondent has been told in the Russian parliament's committee on freedom of conscience, confessions, charity and mercy. Committee members have pointed out governments of the non-Christian republics forming part of Russia will be entitled to make other religious holidays into days off.

The Russian parliament's committee on freedom of conscience, confessions, charity and mercy has itself put forward an initiative to proclaim the Moslem holiday of Sacrifice (Id-al-Kurban) a day off in some predominantly Moslem republics of the Russian federation.

Poll Determines Support for Keeping Holidays*LD0501012992 Moscow TASS in English 2125 GMT
4 Jan 92*

[By TASS correspondent Tamara Ivanova]

[Text] Moscow January 4 TASS—The Russian parliament has not yet taken a final decision on "the calendar red days" (holidays) but the majority of Russians spoke for retaining the International Women's Day, the International Day of Solidarity of the Working People and the Victory Day. Such are the results of the public opinion poll conducted in late December in 20 regions of Russia by the independent sociological service "Mneniye" (Opinion) supported by the Russian National Bank.

Replying to the question about the hypothetical "abolition" of these holidays in favour of Easter vacation, the Russians were of the unanimous opinion: 89.7 percent of Russians insist on preserving the Victory Day; the second in "popularity rating" goes the International Women's Day of March 8 (78.6 percent); 61.5 percent of persons polled come out in favour of the May holidays. It should be noted that May 1 holiday is also in the lead as to the number of its opponents—27.8 percent.

As far as the November holidays (in honour of the October Revolution in 1917) are concerned, 48.9 percent

of Russians wish to transfer them on December 30 and 31, with 41.2 percent of people willing to leave everything as it is.

Last September the results of the public opinion poll were different: 58 percent of Russians spoke for retaining holidays of November 7 and 8, with a little over 30 percent against it. Probably it gives ground to speak of the changing public attitude towards the October Revolution, but at the same time it can testify to a certain share of slyness and a desire to make use of holidays as soon as possible.

Christmas To Be Celebrated in Red Square

LD0601054492 Moscow Programma Radio Odin Network in Russian 1700 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Excerpts] We have two days off ahead of us. Today is the first day of the Christmas holidays. For the first time in more than 70 years, based on a decision by the Supreme Soviet, will we be celebrating Christmas, one of the most festive and joyous holidays. [passage omitted]

To celebrate Christmas, on 7 January a festival will be held in Red Square in Moscow, with a very appropriate name: The Miracle of Christmas. It will end in a grand fireworks display and festive bell ringing. There will be open air markets, a New Year tree, and other public festivities. For three days, festive services will be held in all Orthodox churches, and on Christmas Eve, 6 January, an evening service will take place in the Church of Vasily the Blessed [St. Basil's Cathedral in Red Square]. There will be a procession and bells will be ringing.

For the first time in Soviet history, a Christmas party for children will take place in the Kremlin, to which 1,500 orphans and disabled children are invited. On 7 January, festive services will be held in 12,000 churches, 120 monasteries, and 26 religious schools of the Russian Orthodox Church.

An RIA correspondent learned from the Moscow patriarchate that on Christmas Eve, early on 6 January, Aleksiy II, patriarch of Moscow and all Russia, will celebrate a liturgy in the patriarchal Cathedral of the Epiphany. On the evening of the same day, a festive Christmas vigil will start there, which will last until the morning of 7 January. The Christmas message of the most holy patriarch of Moscow and all Russia will be read in all the churches. The message says that a spiritual rebirth of Russia is currently under way, and will form the basis for an increase in our spiritual life in general. Aleksiy II calls on all people to be at peace and in agreement with one another and to cherish a sincere wish to love others with brotherly love.

Rumors of Rutskoy Transfer to Military Denied

LD0401132992 Moscow TASS in English 1302 GMT 4 Jan 92

[By TASS correspondent Sergey Ostanin]

[Text] Moscow January 4 TASS—Aleksandr Rutskoy will remain Russian vice-president, according to Vice-Presidential Advisor Aleksandr Shamarin, denying rumours Rutskoy will become deputy airforce commander-in-chief.

Shamarin told TASS on Saturday [4 January] the rumours originated after it was announced the vice-president's office is being moved to the Kremlin. Rutskoy, a decorated Afghan war veteran, is an airforce general.

Attempts on Court Members' Lives Reported

OW0301195292 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1802 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] During the closing days of 1991 there was a series of attempts on the lives of the members of the Russian Federation's Constitutional Court and their families, and more attempts were threatened, said Anna Malysheva, chief of the Constitutional Court's press-service to INTERFAX.

At the end of last year there was an assassination attempt on a member of the Constitutional Court whose name was not disclosed. The attempt failed. An inquiry was started into the case.

In addition, there was an attack on the wife and daughter of another member of the Constitutional Court on December 30. It was interrupted by accident.

Another court member had to take his family from Moscow after he had been threatened by telephone.

TASS Reviews Russian TV Newscast

LD0501224292 Moscow TASS in English 2221 GMT 5 Jan 92

["Moscow Evening TV News Programmes—Review"—TASS headline]

[Text] Moscow January 5 TASS—Developments in Georgia, consequences of the liberalisation of prices in the Russian Federation and other members of the Commonwealth of Independent States and the future of the Soviet Army are the highlights of today's evening tv news programmes.

According to Yuriy Rostov, presenter of the Vesti programme, the attention to President Zviad Gamsakhurdia has decreased, although, judging by the latest reports, the opposition forces led by the Military Council began again the assault of the House of Government. The opposition enjoys the support of some 90 per cent of Tbilisi residents. The population of most regions of the republic is also loyal to it. Gamsakhurdia's opponents seem to be no longer interested in how long the president intends to remain in his bunker.

Between January 8 and 10 President Yeltsin will tour Saratov, Ulyanovsk and Nizhni Novgorod, and on January 14 and 15 he will visit St. Petersburg and Bryansk, the Vesti programme reported.

Russian Vice-Premier Yegor Gaydar said that there is no one to control prices, because this should be done by the market which is still being formed. Thus, Vesti concluded, no clear answer to this question has been given.

The Sunday [5 January] news programme Itogi (Results), broadcast by the first TV programme, included an interview with Grigoriy Yavlinskiy. He said that late in January and early in February it would be clear whether or not the price reform has been a success. In case of hyperinflation the improvement of the situation will, most probably, depend on political stabilisation. The main problem is: Who, for the sake of what goals and by what methods is going to achieve stabilisation.

Russian TV received many telephone calls on Sunday because of a Vesti report, broadcast on Saturday. Many viewers understood from that report that all collective and state farms in Russia would be dissolved in three months. Of course, it is not so. President Yeltsin's decree says in this connection that the ways of reorganising loss-making collective and state farms should be outlined within three months. In other words, measures should be taken to enable peasants from loss-making collective and state farms to earn their living. The creation of individual farms is one of the ways to it.

Ukraine's departure from principles of military cooperation, the document on which was signed by the Ukrainian president in Minsk, continues to be given much attention by TV. Vesti pointed out that one should not believe these differences, along with economic contradictions, may lead to the disintegration of the Commonwealth, although the departure from those documents is certainly noteworthy.

All-Union TV Moves to Russian Jurisdiction

PM0601102192 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian
31 Dec 91 Union Edition p 3

[Report by S. Mostovshchikov: "Yegor Yakovlev Instructed To Hand Over All-Union Television and Radio Broadcasting Company to Yegor Yakovlev"]

[Text] In view of the abolition of the Soviet Union by a decree Boris Yeltsin has also abolished USSR television. The All-Union Television and Radio Broadcasting Company must surrender all property, buildings, and its technical base to a newly created organization—the "Ostankino" Russian State Television and Radio Broadcasting Company. The leader of the old company—Yegor Yakovlev—will lead the new company. This was announced 29 December to journalists at a special presentation (a press conference with sandwiches).

The RSTRBC [Russian State Television and Radio Broadcasting Company] will essentially be a second

Russian state television company alongside Russian TV and also, of course, independent. According to Boris Nepomnyashchiy, general director of the Information Television Agency—the main structural subdivision of the RSTRBC—"Ostankino" expects independence as of 1993 since in 1992 the new company will be financed from the budget. During this dependence on the state "Ostankino" must decide in accordance with the decree how to free itself from this dependence and, while it remains a state company, try not to feel pressured by the authorities.

To all appearances the RSTRBC will achieve the desired effect, becoming a joint-stock company. Boris Nepomnyashchiy announced that in the long term shares will be issued, 51 percent of which will belong to the company's labor collective. Here shares will be issued free to staffers but if they leave they will have to sell them to the RSTRBC. Thus "Ostankino" will always retain the controlling block and it will provide the company with the status of a state collective establishment.

The remaining shares will be sold to those who want to buy them—in our country and abroad. The press conference did not announce who exactly would get the shares, and how many, but noted that questions of the sale of securities to outside investors will be resolved "on a consensus basis."

How will the consensus affect the content of the new company's programs? To all appearances Yegor Yakovlev intends to increase the amount of information provided by his television, in which connection the number of news programs will increase sharply. Every day the Television News Agency will broadcast to the whole country (the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States]) five 20-minute news programs at 1200, 1500, 1800, 2100, and 0000 hours Moscow time. In addition every Sunday at 2200 hours there will be an "Itogi" ["Results"] program in which announcer Yevgeniy Kiselev will analyze the past weeks.

The Television News Agency also wants to be independent, although it belongs to the RSTRBC structures. To this end the Television News Agency will receive its own corporate identity and bank account. Yegor Yakovlev and his department will either conclude contracts with the television news agency staffers or will buy the agency's programs. Television viewers, also now independent everywhere, will not buy anything from Yegor Yakovlev or from the Television News Agency but will simply watch the first program and get pleasure from it thanks to Boris Yeltsin's decree on the abolition of one company and the formation of another.

New Television Joint-Stock Company Presented

PM0601112792 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian
27 Dec 91 Union Edition p 7

[VI. Arsenyev report: "We Are Being Offered Commercial Television"]

[Text] The "'VKT' Television Company" joint-stock company has announced its existence by means of a presentation in the press center of the former Foreign Ministry of the former USSR.

The company's founders include the "Russian Commodity and Raw Material Exchange" joint-stock company, the "Rinako" joint-stock company, "VKT" [expansion unknown], the Russian National Commercial Bank, the "Economic News Agency" joint-stock company, the "Vilnius Exchange", the "Asian Exchange" joint-stock company, and others. We have cited this list in order to emphasize what powerful forces of emergent capitalism stand behind this as yet unusual venture.

At a news conference Konstantin Borovoy, manager of the "Russian Commodity and Raw Material Exchange" (probably the main protagonist), also said that full agreement has been reached both with the Russian State Television and Radio Company and with the television technical center at Ostankino. He introduced "VKT" President Vladimir Ananich, with whom he co-chairs the new joint-stock company. The latter, after mentioning the fact that "VKT" already has weekly programs devoted to business on Central Television and Russian Television channels, briefly outlined a quite extensive program for the immediate future. "VKT" intends to create a nationwide commercial television network in which the chief place is allocated to making and placing advertisements. Preconditions are being created for a direct satellite relay with access to a foreign audience. "VKT" will develop regional and local commercial radio broadcasting and television, including cable television, and will introduce subscription television.

"VKT" Director Vladimir Shevardnadze added that the potential that the joint-stock company possesses will make it possible to create not one but several movie, television, and cartoon studios. The incorporation capital of the "'VKT' Television Company" joint-stock company stands at 400 million rubles [R]. Subscribing to shares has already begun. "Rinako" is conducting it in the Polytechnic Museum building in Moscow. The price of a single share is R1,000. It is possible to acquire them (to subscribe) in packages of 25 shares. The size of the dividends, when it comes round to this, will be decided by the board of directors of the joint-stock company. The board of directors believes that profitability over two years could be at least 100 percent.

Of course, the journalists present at the news conference were interested in how relations will be arranged with [?Central] Television and Russian Television. Will it not happen that "'VKT' Television Company" transmissions will little by little squeeze the transmissions of the companies that already exist? It was stated in reply that the aim is to broadcast on its own channel. However, it is not yet clear when this channel will appear.

The acuteness of the situation has been compounded by the fact that K. Borovoy recently became an economic

adviser to Yegor Yakovlev, leader of the All-Union State Television and Radio Company. Borovoy himself finds nothing ambiguous in this. On the contrary, according to him, the model for floating shares in "'VKT' Television Company" will also be suitable for the upcoming flotation of shares in the state television and radio company, once the most important and only one in the country. Although, as he emphasized, it will be far more complex to privatize and float shares in the former All-Union State Television and Radio Company.

Be that as it may, the creation of the "'VKT' Television Company" joint-stock company changes the established structure in the world of radio and television. Something that only recently seemed impossible already exists. And the timid suggestions by the leadership of the USSR State Committee for Television and Radio Broadcasting in the pages of IZVESTIYA 18 months ago with regard to introducing a subscription payment of R10 a month for the use of a television set now appear simply naive. It is quite possible that in time almost all television channels will be encoded. And maybe only the Russian Television channel will be accessible to viewers free of charge, because it receives a state subsidy...

Christian Democrats Oppose Government Policies

LD0401020292 Moscow Teleradiokompanii Ostankino
Television First Program Network in Russian
2203 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Report by reporter S. Suntsov from the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] The Christian Democratic Movement has sharply criticized the Russian leadership's policies. (Viktor Aksyuchis), chairman of the movement's Political Council, stated at a news conference that he is not opposed to the Russian president but to certain steps taken by the leadership. The absence of a clearcut reform program, the hasty dismemberment of a united country and foundation of rival states, and complacency toward the development of the conflict in Ossetia and the North Caucasus in general threaten to turn into a national catastrophe.

Referring to the economic reform, the leaders of the movement noted that deregulation of prices, without removing the monopoly of state ownership, could lead to the people being fleeced yet again. The premature dissolution of collective and state farms, the main producers of food, condemns the country to hunger. The campaign to humiliate the national dignity of Russians and the creation of millions of Russian refugees could push Russian society far to the right, says a statement issued to the press.

A congress of Russia's patriotic forces is to be convened in Moscow this February. According to the organizers, this promises to become an influential opposition force.

Lopatin Interviewed on Armed Forces Composition

PM0301161592 Moscow MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI
in Russian No 52, 29 Dec 91 p 9

[Interview with Vladimir Lopatin, deputy chairman of the Russian State Committee for Defense Questions, by Aleksandr Tsyganov, under the "Opinion" rubric; place and date not given: "The Unified Armed Forces Are No More. And They Are Not Needed"]

[Text] The headline evidently reflects how we can formulate the stance of the Russian State Committee for Defense Questions following the Belarussian agreements. Another term is currently in use here, which reflects the new reality of our Eurasian conglomerate: joint [obyedinnennyye] armed forces.

"To set your hopes on the continued preservation of unified [yedinye] armed forces is simply political deafness and blindness, which would lead to the further disintegration of the army," Vladimir Lopatin, deputy chairman of the Russian State Committee for Defense Questions, believes. "Reality has changed: The emergence on the territory of the USSR of a number of independent states which have the most varied ideas about the solution of defense questions.

"In the course of the development of the present events, three options for deciding the future of the Armed Forces emerged. A unified army with a unified command as before. Then, joint armed forces, which would contain a unified component: nuclear weapons and strategic deterrent forces. And the third option—strictly national republic armies, where all the armed forces on the territory of a particular republic are transferred to its jurisdiction.

"All three options are now represented in our country. The Baltic states are counting exclusively on their own armed forces, whereas, for instance, Central Asia supported the idea of a unified army for a long time. Now, following the creation of SNV [conventional abbreviation for 'strategic offensive weapons'; possibly misprint for SNG, meaning 'Commonwealth of Independent States'], a middle option, which is only in draft form at the moment, has been presented.

"The interests of every group in the state are understandable. For example, unified armed forces are advantageous for the Central Asian republics: Local budgets are simply not in a position to maintain a normal army. Furthermore, an alarming tendency to form a mononational officers' corps by transferring officers of indigenous nationality to the territory of a given republic is discernible here. What is more, decisions to recruit local draftees for units deployed in republics have been adopted everywhere..."

[Tsyganov] And a separate army is formed out of the common Union budget, as if out of thin air!

[Lopatin] Recognition of the unity of the armed forces ultimately led, in the space of one or two years, to the implementation of entirely autonomous republic forces [sentence as published].

Incidentally, in September representatives of all 15 republics confirmed that the idea of joint armed forces, which was elaborated by our committee, is the best one. But it was not put into effect. Because the center leaned toward the Central Asian states' position, as it always had been. Maybe because this enabled it to do nothing.

[Tsyganov] What is the essence of your option?

[Lopatin] The idea of joint armed forces came into being during consultations with the republics. And during further work on it, as I see it the best option emerged.

The first component is unified strategic deterrent forces and unified nuclear weapons. This means primarily the antiballistic missile defense troops and the air defense troops, which ensure strategic stability, and then the famous nuclear triad in the Air Force, the strategic missile forces, and the Navy. All nuclear weapons including tactical weapons.

The second component is the armed forces transferred to the jurisdiction of republics from those that are deployed on their territories. Admittedly the question again arises here: Is the republic in a position to maintain these forces...

[Tsyganov] And if it is not?

[Lopatin] Then evidently these troops will be recognized as Commonwealth forces, but that also has to be resolved during the negotiating process.

Finally, third: republic guards, which will probably be created on the basis of the existing internal troops formation.

The central Armed Forces command and control organs—the Ministry of Defense and the General Staff—must be transformed. They will have to transfer some of their powers and functions to republic jurisdiction. Generally, I think that the highest body in the joint armed forces might be a council consisting of heads of state. We intend to form a council of ministers of defense under it in order to coordinate direct command and control of the joint armed forces. At the same time, it is important to ensure the division of the functions of this joint defense committee and General Staff by holding all discussions at a political level. The Army should not participate in them, it should not decide for itself what tasks to tackle; these are the state's prerogatives. But of course the task to be resolved in the talks is to provide concrete backup for this transition.

That, I repeat, is the real way out of the crisis. [Lopatin ends]

**Stationing of General-Purpose Forces in the Former
Republics of the Former USSR**

Republic	Number of Divisions	Interceptors	Tactical Aviation
Armenia	3	0	0
Azerbaijan	4	30	100
Belarus	10	110	360
Georgia	4	50	190
Kazakhstan	4	100	240
Kyrgyzstan	1	0	0
Moldova	1	0	0
Russia	71	1400	980
Tajikistan	1	0	0
Turkmenistan	4	70	90
Ukraine	20	230	620
Uzbekistan	1	30	260
Estonia	1	110	0
Latvia	1	30	150
Lithuania	4	0	70

[Footnotes appended to table]

1. There are another 16 regular divisions in Eastern Europe and Mongolia.
2. Naval aviation aircraft not included in the figures for interceptors and tactical aviation
3. The presence and definitive withdrawal of forces from the Baltic states, which have recently gained their independence are the subject of talks between the Baltic and Moscow.

New Moscow Air Defense Commander Interviewed
PM0201104192 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA
in Russian 20 Dec 91 First Edition p 2

[Interview with Colonel General of Aviation A. Kornukov, commander of the Moscow Air Defense District, by Colonel V. Gavrilenko—place and date not given: "Without Becoming Depressed"—first paragraph is KRASNAYA ZVEZDA introduction]

[Text] As we have already reported Colonel General of Aviation A. Kornukov has been appointed commander of the Moscow Air Defense District. Today he is answering our correspondent's questions.

[Gavrilenko] Anatoliy Mikhaylovich, more than two months now have passed since you were appointed. How have they turned out for you?

[Kornukov] Very tense. Without trying to be devious, I must say that the offer of the new post was a complete surprise to me. Up till then, I had commanded a large strategic air defense formation in the Far East. And now Moscow, the country's central region, and I am in charge of a whole district now... For this reason all my time in the new post has been taken up studying the conditions troops are in at bases, getting to know people, assessing

units' and subunits' winter preparations, and carrying out overall checks. If I am to talk about my impressions they are very varied. I have had, so to say, both distress and gratification in equal measure. There have been many matters to which I have had to roll up my sleeves and apply myself immediately. It has been no less important to determine my position with regard to the immediate future.

[Gavrilenko] Which problems have immediately gotten themselves noticed owing to their acuteness and urgency?

[Kornukov] There is first and foremost the exploitation of the units' and subunits' combat capability. Not everything in this area meets the demands of the time and the military and strategic situation. There is food for thought here. Practical measures which bring the personnel's, hardware's, and weapons' current and implemented capability in line with their potential capability are necessary. We will have to reject many old approaches and to search for new ones in this area.

Next, the absolutely appalling facilities of several units and subunits in the district stunned me. Their is an acute shortage of housing. There are many reasons for this; there are, as people say, plenty of examples I could quote. Whether or not you quote any, you still have to get out of these impasses. We hope nevertheless to resolve these problems in the coming two years.

The other things that are not giving us any peace are the incidents some of which are tragic. To be frank there are many of them going on in the district. But there would be fewer of them if the commanders and superior officers did not blame everything on objective difficulties, and did not become depressed by the hopelessness which is weighing down on them, but set about actually working with people. But for many years we had gotten used to shunning this work and replacing it with reports to our superiors about the state of affairs. And things just went on happening as they happened. I look forward with hope for a number of legislative acts on defense and on servicemen's status to be adopted. They will no doubt lead to the necessary changes.

[Gavrilenko] You have come to lead a new collective; I have in mind the district's administration. How are your relations with people developing?

[Kornukov] There are no great problems here. In the absolute majority of cases people who are decent, knowledgeable, and devoted to their work are serving in the district's administration. My military service work has brought me into contact with many of them before. I have always remembered and continue to remember the ingenuous precept—when you have, so to speak, made your way "in the world," do not forget about those who are alongside you. I will try to retain a benevolent attitude in my relations. I depend on the integrity and trust of the people who are around me.

[Gavrilenko] How acute are personnel problems in the district?

[Kornukov] I would not call them acute, but they do exist. The hemorrhage of officers not wishing to serve has significantly decreased. But there is nevertheless a shortage of them. This increases the work load on the others and creates additional difficulties. Here, doubtless, we should think about increasing pay for official job duties. Moreover, there is a natural replacement of one generation by another. You cannot find replacements overnight for those who have been transferred to the reserve. But this is an age-old problem, we have gotten used to it, and there is no getting away from it.

I cannot help but mention those occurrences we have encountered recently. I have in mind the return to service of young officers who have previously been dismissed. It is sometimes those who left a "bad" impression when they quit the Army who are trying to return. But now by taking advantage of the democratic processes in society and having secured the support of various bodies connected in one way or another with Army life (by simply leading them astray), they are trying to "arrange" for themselves their reappointment to their former ranks and posts. I will try to stop such attempts.

[Gavrilenko] Anatoliy Mikhaylovich, you can sometimes hear Muscovites putting forward disturbing arguments about the difficulties and confusion which characterize the political and economic situation taking their toll also, as they say, on the capital's air defense... More than enough irony has been directed against the familiar saying which has existed for many years "Moscow's skies are firmly secured..."

[Kornukov] I can with full responsibility only say one thing in reply to this: Moscow's security has not deteriorated one bit. People are saying slanderous things about this in vain. But I will not hide anything, there are difficulties. It has now become much more difficult to maintain the necessary level of combat readiness than a few years ago. The insufficient level of recruitment is taking its toll, as are the infrequency of men enlisting through the "draft," and the deterioration of living conditions, and not all is well as concerns energy supplies for hardware and weapons... And it seems to me that a wave of groundless pacifism has engulfed many people.

[Gavrilenko] At present complex processes are taking place in the regions and republics. The Army has one way or another been drawn into these processes. Is this leaving its mark on the district?

[Kornukov] To be blunt—no. But we have had enough of the headaches caused by those people who are being drafted into the district from those places. We are now discharging ordinary soldiers, noncommissioned officers, officers, and warrant officers who were drafted from the Baltic states. According to their own wishes of course. The processes which are going on in the republics and regions are of course reflected in the conscripts' moods. Sometimes fairly serious situations arise. The

ordinary soldiers' fellow countrymen whip up their passions: Appeals are reaching the units and subunits for the men to quit serving and return home with their arms. Recently, requests have come from officers who are natives of Ukraine that they be sent to serve in their homeland. Unfortunately there are still also AWOL servicemen, which is worrying both us and their parents. These parents come straight to us, and express their suffering and indignation. And what can we say to them? Their sons are no longer naive little boys. And they should take stock of their actions.

[Gavrilenko] What questions do officers, warrant officers, and members of their families come to you with most often?

[Kornukov] Those concerning obtaining accommodation and improving living conditions. As well as material security and daily life. Questions concerning personnel. Basically these. All this is understandable: The country and the people are finding life hard, which means that the Army is also finding life hard. But what particularly bothers me is that the number of inquiries on official matters addressed to us, questions concerning the performance of alert duty and the like, has considerably diminished in comparison with past years. This is an alarming trend.

Supreme Soviet

Ukraine's Troop Plans Cause 'Serious Concern'

OW0301153192 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1409 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Chairman of the Russian parliament's Committee for International Affairs and Foreign Trade, Mr. Vladimir Lukin, expressed serious concern about the Ukraine's decision to put the troops located in its territory, with the exception of the strategic nuclear forces, on the oath of allegiance to the Ukraine. He told IF [INTERFAX] that he was "surprised" by the position of the Russian government which seems to be neglecting the Ukraine's unilateral moves" [quotations as received].

Mr. Lukin believes that a Russian delegation should be sent to the Ukraine without delay "to make it clear if the Commonwealth of Independent States really exists or if it is merely a cover for the policy of *faits accomplis*". Mr. Lukin also noted that a Russian-Ukrainian commission should exercise control over the implementation of the agreements on the inadvisability of any unilateral actions in relation to the armed forces before they are officially subdivided into unified Commonwealth troops and the national formations of the republics.

Deputies Send Letter to Ukraine

PM0501211592 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA
in Russian 4 Jan 92 First Edition p 1

[Unattributed report: "Will the Ukrainian Flag Be Raised Over Ships of Black Sea Fleet"]

[Text] Russian people's deputies, including Rutskoy, Zaytsev, Pochinok, Ambartsumov, Surkov, and Lukin, have sent an open letter to the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet.

As we have learned, it says that on 2 January 1992 the senior officers of the Black Sea Fleet were invited to the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet, where the general and flag officers were ordered to take the new military oath of allegiance to Ukraine and to raise the Ukrainian state flag above the ships of the Black Sea Fleet.

There is information that similar demands may have been presented to Air Force troops stationed on Ukrainian territory.

These actions violate the Alma-Ata and Minsk Agreements—on which the ink is not yet dry—and create, in our opinion, a dangerous situation.

We ask the Ukrainian parliament to confirm or deny the aforementioned information and, if it is true, explain to us what caused the Ukrainian leadership to take such actions.

For our part, we urge you to strictly comply with the Minsk and Alma-Ata accords and to resolve all the most complex problems, including the problem of the Armed Forces, through talks while observing equal security and mutual respect. Our parliaments must not only be able to formulate but also to defend an independent standpoint, even if on certain questions it diverges from the standpoint of the government or president. We wish to remind you of the enormous responsibility which you and we bear toward our peoples.

Lukin Criticizes 'Unilateral Action'

LD0401174692 Moscow Russian Television Network
in Russian 1200 GMT 4 Jan 92

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] On 3 January, the Ukraine announced the nationalization of all troops and the Black Sea fleet, except the strategic forces located on its territory. The split-up of the most formidable and cohesive structure of the old union, its armed forces, has begun. The troops of three military districts have to take an oath of loyalty to the new sovereign state and its people. Those who refuse to accept it face a harsh choice: transfer to another country in the Commonwealth of Independent States or to the reserve. The strategic forces, though, will take a different, non-Ukrainian oath from 10 to 15 January. One more thing: with the collapse of the union Ministry of Defense, it might turn out that there are not enough

resources to maintain the new armies, for according to expert estimates, it costs \$70,000-80,000 million to run the Black Sea fleet alone. A group of Russian members of parliament have expressed their view on this problem in an open letter to the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet.

[begin recording] [V.Lukin, Chairman of Russian Supreme Soviet Commission for International Relations and Foreign Economic Issues] Unfortunately, the negotiations are proceeding according to this method, the method of faits accomplis. Negotiations take place, certain accords are reached, or else an accord is reached to continue the negotiations, but then, the next day, unilateral action is taken. Do our friends in the Ukraine, the Ukrainian side, realize that we are dealing in this case with Russia's vital interests, with property which has been created over centuries? [end recording]

Regional Affairs

Yeltsin Grants Moscow Mayor Additional Powers

OW0301213192 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1944 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Russian President Boris Yeltsin gave additional powers to the Moscow mayor toward setting a favourable climate for the implementation of radical economic reforms in the city. The president's decree recognizes Moscow's special functions as the Russian capital and the mayor's powers in stepping up the privatisation of municipal property. The decree gives Moscow a special status.

In 1992 the Moscow budget will receive 15% of the profits tax and 5% of the added-value tax from the companies operating in the city. The city's executive bodies have also been authorized to determine the list of goods the prices of which will not be fully decontrolled, and to introduce free prices with the subsequent compensation.

INTERFAX learned from a source in the City Hall that Moscow mayor Gavriil Popov had told a group of businessmen on Friday that though Mr. Yeltsin's decree "plays a positive role, it fails to address all important questions, including a vague distribution of the functions of the executive and representative powers."

It was stated at the meeting that the municipal authorities will have authority over the Moscow metro and several big hotels.

Moscow Vice Mayor Describes Yeltsin Talks

PM0301140392 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian
27 Dec 91 Union Edition p 2

[V. Kononenko report: "In Yu. Luzhkov's Opinion, G. Popov Has No Reason To Go"]

[Text] Yu. Luzhkov, vice mayor of Moscow, has told journalists about the meeting which representatives of the Moscow government had with Russian President B. Yeltsin on the evening of 25 December. First Vice Premier G. Burbulis also participated in it.

Yu. Luzhkov reported that the food situation in Moscow, legal backup for the city's power structures, and the implementation of large-scale reforms—of privatization, above all—were discussed during the two-hour talks with the president. Practically all the city hall's proposals, which had been sent to the president earlier, received support. The possibility of realizing the programs begun by the Moscow government is thereby being opened up.

At the request of IZVESTIYA's correspondent the vice mayor dwelt on the problem of defining the status of Moscow. A draft decree with a list of operational measures in this area for the period through the adoption of the status law has been submitted to B. Yeltsin. The basis of these proposals has been discussed repeatedly, and it has now been decided to formulate everything in the decree very quickly, within 72 hours. With regard to other proposals from Moscow City Hall the president adopted a decision also to publish decrees and government resolutions within 24 hours. Thus, Yu. Luzhkov continued, the reasons for G. Popov's announced resignation are removed, and he has good cause to take back his statement. However, G. Popov will most likely make his final decision after his meeting with B. Yeltsin scheduled for 26 December.

Answering journalists' questions, Yu. Luzhkov also reported that the Moscow government has no intention of changing the conditions for the privatization of housing (it must be transferred to the population free of charge) and trade. The president's decrees (there are approximately 10, including the transfer of the subway, the power and gas networks, and the system for supplying the city with petroleum products to the Moscow government's jurisdiction) will ensure legal guarantees for the implementation of reforms. A draft decree has been prepared which creates a new organizational system for supplying Moscow with food.

Newspaper Claims No Moscow Gasoline Shortage

*LD0401015292 Moscow TASS International Service
in Russian 1912 GMT 3 Jan 92*

[By TASS correspondent Konstantin Voytsekhovich]

[Excerpt] Moscow, 3 Jan (TASS)—[passage omitted] There is no shortage of gasoline in Moscow. Today's edition of the newspaper VECHERNYAYA MOSKVA informs readers about this. According to V. Biryukov, deputy manager of the Mosnftproduct Association, the gasoline reserves in the city exceed 8,000 tonnes. People can get gasoline at any filling station.

Moscow Official Says Western Aid Insufficient

LD0501220392

[Editorial Report] Moscow Mayak Radio in Russian at 0330 GMT on 5 January broadcasts a 6-minute telephone interview with Vladimir Alekseyevich Kornoukhov, deputy prime minister of the government of Moscow, by correspondent Vladimir Korablev, on the capital's supply of food and goods. Reception is fair.

During the interview Kornoukhov says: "By 2 January all reserves of goods which should have been in the shops had been bought up. By the 2d, practically all the shops were without the basic products." "So, in order to fill the shops now, we must work very persistently for two weeks at least, import large volumes of foodstuffs, and then the situation may improve," Kornoukhov says. "The situation will improve gradually over the next two weeks with the exception of the trade in meat products, milk, animal fat, vodka, and sugar."

Kornoukhov adds that reserves of meat in Moscow are very low, deliveries of milk from the Moscow oblast are down even on last year's low figure, and that other oblasts have practically ceased to deliver milk to Moscow, and the city does not have a single gram's reserve of dried milk. As for vodka and sugar, even after the price rises these are being snapped up immediately, and there are queues of 400 people for sugar.

He then cites exorbitant prices at which Lipetsk and Belgorod oblasts have offered to sell meat to Moscow. He says none of the sovereign states have begun to deliver foodstuffs to Moscow since the New Year. Lithuania is delivering a small amount of foodstuffs at contractual prices. Belarus and the Ukraine have offered to sell meat at the same exorbitant prices as Lipetsk and Belgorod oblasts.

Speaking of the humanitarian aid from the West, Kornoukhov says that 45 tonnes of animal fat arrived by airplane from Germany yesterday and 45 tonnes of dried milk has also been unloaded. Two planes, each carrying 120 tonnes of meat have been loaded up in Britain; 2,000 tonnes of meat is arriving in St. Petersburg by sea from Ireland for the city and for Moscow.

Kornoukhov says: "The situation is such that the volume of aid from the EEC today is equal to 152,000 tonnes. That is solid support for two months for the cities of Moscow and Leningrad. These amounts do not fully meet our requirements. We hope that this aid is timely, but at the same time we are trying to convince the leadership of the EEC that all credits granted by these countries should be given—but they still have doubts as to who will guarantee these credits."

In conclusion, Kornoukhov says he hopes that the currently unacceptable food situation in the capital will soon be put right.

Moscow Reserves Spent on 'Essential Goods'

LD0401105292 Moscow All-Union Radio Mayak
Network in Russian 0800 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Text] Yevgeniy Faynshmit, head of the external economic relations department of the Moscow government, told a RIA correspondent that Moscow currency reserves were only 5 million dollars. He said that this money would be spent on purchasing the most essential goods for the life of the city. For example, a few thousand will be spent purchasing fork-lift trucks from Bulgaria for vegetable storehouses in the capital. An artificial kidney system is to be bought for 2 million dollars. Imported shoes will be among the consumer goods that will reach shop counters. Faynshmit noted that in total Moscow needed 5 billion dollars to purchase imported goods.

Tatarstan Refuses To Sign Treaty With Moscow

OW0301193092 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1802 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Mr. Rafael Khakimov, a adviser of Tatarstan's president, said on local television that Tatarstan would not sign a federal treaty offered by the Russian parliament. He described it as a treaty of a unitary state.

Mr Khakimov also expressed doubts as to a possible success of Russian economic reform. In his view, economic transformations are possible only on condition of political stability which Russia lacks.

Tatarstan Issues Decree on Prices, Wages

LD0601004392 Moscow POSTFACTUM in English
1851 GMT 5 Jan 92

[From the "Domestic Market" section; "Tatarstan Bans Limitations for Wages and Consumption-Aimed Funds"—POSTFACTUM headline]

[Text] Under the decrees by Tatarstan's President Mintimer Shaimiyev on additional compensation allowances and procedure for income indexation of population in 1992 and on minimal social guarantees for the population of Tatarstan, published on January 4 by the SOVETSKAYA TATARIA newspaper, enterprises and organizations will determine the size of funds, earmarked for consumption, independently within the limits of their proceeds in compliance with the RSFSR law "On Enterprises and Entrepreneurial Activities" till the relative laws of the TSSR [Tatarstan Soviet Socialist Republic] are adopted.

According to the decrees, the working week should be no less than 40 hours with the annual worker paid holiday regardless occupation - not less than 24 work days of 6-day working week. The minimal unemployment benefit will amount to 90 percent of minimal wage (342 roubles). Full-time students with good results will be paid 80 percent of the minimal wage level and the

students of secondary educational establishments—70 percent. New social allowance rate for the mothers with young children, jobless and working pensioners have also been established.

Tatarstan 'Prepared' To Set Independent Policy

OW0301160892 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1409 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Vice-President of Tatarstan Vasily Likhachev stated that an independent but coordinated foreign policy based on the principles of international law and the UN Charter is an integral part of such sovereign state as Tatarstan. Speaking in Kazan, he pointed out that today the republic is prepared to set up its own foreign political and economic structures having an intellectual potential for the preparation of diplomats, international lawyer and economists. He also said that the strategic goal is now to ensure the transition from contacts between separate enterprises and firms to intergovernmental agreements and that "conditions for that already exist." Mr. Likhachev noted great interest in Tatarstan today.

Chechen President Threatens Pipeline Closure

LD0401052792 Moscow Radio Rossii Network
in Russian 0200 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Text] As of 1 February, the pipelines through which fuel passes from the Chechen Republic to the southern areas of Russia may be closed again. A TASS correspondent learned that Dzhokhar Dudayev, president of the Chechen Republic, has made a decision to switch to settling consumer accounts in freely convertible currency as of 1 February.

Chechen Leader Stops Deliveries To Georgia

LD0401182192 Moscow TASS International Service
in Russian 1654 GMT 4 Jan 92

[by TASS correspondent Sharip Asuyev]

[Text] Groznyy, 4 Jan (TASS)—As from this moment the Chechen Republic will not make any more deliveries to Georgia of goods and output until there is a complete halt to the armed putsch and fratricidal war. A TASS correspondent has just been informed of this by President Dzhokhar Dudayev. He has also revealed that he intends to put the same proposal to the leadership of Azerbaijan.

According to Dzhokhar Dudayev's economic adviser Ramzan Goy-Temirov, the Chechen Republic has been supplying Georgia with a fair amount of fuel oil and diesel fuel and that halting deliveries will be greatly felt by Georgia.

Lately Dzhokhar Dudayev has also taken efforts to curb the bloodshed in neighboring Georgia. In particular, he

came forward with an initiative to send special military formations like the OMON [special purpose militia detachments] "Blue Helmets" to Tbilisi, if the Georgian leadership wants this, so as to separate the belligerents. These formations are set up in Grozny and will be ready to go with a peacemaking mission to any hotspot in the Caucasus.

As has become known to TASS, the Chechen Republic is supplying itself with automatic weapons of its own manufacture. The first automatic weapon manufactured by local craftsmen was ceremonially presented to the President of the Republic. A folding automatic weapon fires 9 mm cartridges and can be easily hidden even under a coat. Specialists note that the automatic, which has been dubbed the "Borz" ("Wolf"), surpasses international models in its main features, and particularly the Israeli automatic "Uzi" weapon.

The designers of the new weapon, as well as the place where it is manufactured, are being kept secret. Movladi Udugov, minister of information and the press of the Chechen Republic, has said merely that the serial production of the automatic weapons will be arranged in the near future and the republic armed forces as well as militia will be equipped with them.

Dudayev To Establish Special Military Forces

LD0401193192 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1618 GMT 4 Jan 92

[By TASS correspondent Sharip Asuyev]

[Text] Grozny, 4 Jan (TASS)—Dzhokhar Dudayev, president of the Chechen Republic, intends to create special military formations which can be used for "maintaining peace" in hotspots in the Caucasus.

According to the president's press service, these troops will be created at the local section of the International Committee for Human Rights. Principles of the organization and methods of actions of these formations are not specified. Sergey Boykov, press service spokesman, only noted that on the decision by Dzhokhar Dudayev these detachments could arrive in Tbilisi for "separating the belligerents if there is an official request from the Georgian leadership." He also said Dzhokhar Dudayev adopted a few more decisions of principle last night. In particular, on his instructions a National Olympic Committee of the Chechen Republic has been set up and a basis for an Olympic village has been defined.

Sergey Boykov also confirmed that Dzhokhar Dudayev intends to go over to world prices in freely convertible currency in settling consumer accounts with other regions and to come forward as an initiator for creating a single Caucasian economic zone.

The latest decisions by the president of the Chechen Republic yet again bring to mind his recent statement to journalists that the republic will buy two islands in

northern and southern seas in order to deploy oil storage tanks there and to arrange a repair base for its future tanker fleet.

Unknown Gunmen Kill Army Officer in Grozny

OW0501180592 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1712 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] On the night of January 4/5, unidentified assailants shot dead a Soviet Army major on a military base in Grozny. A meeting of the Grozny garrison was held and demanded that Dzhokhar Dudayev have the criminals detained before January 8 and that they be put on public trial. A statement passed by the meeting notes that in December 1991 alone, Army servicemen were attacked on 17 occasions, including nine armed attacks.

The Grozny garrison demanded in an appeal to the officers of the Soviet Army that they refuse to swear allegiance to the republics they serve in and called for an officer meeting before the end of January.

Accident Causes Shutdown of Maritime Plant

LD0501063192 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 0500 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Text] Maritime Kray is on the verge of an energy famine. At 0600 this morning there was an emergency shutdown of the 200- megawatt ninth block of the Primorskaya [coal firing] regional electric power plant.

"The accident will be handled in a few hours at the most," Stanislav Rura, deputy chief engineer of the Far East Energy kray association, told a TASS correspondent. "What is terrible is that we are faced with the real need to stop the supply of energy to industrial enterprises. The reason is the acute shortage of fuel. Maritime Kray miners are not guaranteeing the power engineering workers's requirements. There are not any deliveries from other areas of the country. Power stations are already using coal reserves. Unless urgent measures are taken, the question of stopping the population's heat supply will also arise."

The expected winter temperatures in the kray are lower than normal. Meanwhile, coal extracting enterprises are continuing to send fuel abroad by barter.

'Strategic' Food Bank Opened in Khabarovsk

OW0501024492 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1942 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] By decision of the Russian government the strategic food reserve has been opened up in the Khabarovsk region. IF's [INTERFAX] correspondent reports 1,500 tons of sugar, 2 million cans with meat, as well as butter and powdered milk have been taken out.

According to local authorities, 3,000 tons of butter and 400 tons of meat are being loaded in St. Petersburg and Klaipeda ports for those of Khabarovsk resident who have not realized last year's food coupons. Soon Klaipeda port will receive some 700,000 tons of poultry from abroad also to be delivered to the Khabarovsk region.

In the meantime, local officials are visiting all of the Russian regions to negotiate food supplies. On the same mission head of the Khabarovsk regional administration Viktor Ishayev leaves for China within days.

Impact of Price Rises in Irkutsk Reported

PM0501221592 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian
3 Jan 92 Morning Edition p 1

[Vladimir Sbitnev report: "The People Grumble, But They Buy"]

[Text] Irkutsk—The first thing that strikes you in Irkutsk in the morning is the fact that people are carrying bread: Some are carrying two, some three loaves. Even though its price is over two rubles [R], they are pleased that it is on sale. Today R2 is not money. In the market, beef being sold by a trade-purchase enterprise costs more than R70, a bucket of potatoes from a private trader costs R35, and a liter of frozen milk R10. People grumble, but they buy. Market workers maintain that these prices will increase a little in a few days' time.

The leasehold vegetable store in the city center is trading in onions, carrots, and beets. The choice is meager, but the prices are last year's: onions at R7.50. In the state store they have changed the price tags only on mineral water. There simply are none of the other products subject to a markup. And those that there are have long been on sale at contract prices.

Five Oblasts Form Economic Association

OW0201172092 Moscow Central Television First Program and Orbita Networks in Russian 2000 GMT
26 Dec 91

[Video report by V. Foshenko; from the "Utro" program]

[Text] [Begin Foshenko recording] The administration heads of the five oblasts in the central Black Earth [chernozem] region—who have gathered here today in Voronezh—individually and collectively decided that they could not survive alone.

The aim of the meeting is completely certain in our far-from-certain times: to create an association for economic assistance in the development of the Voronezh, Lipetsk, Tambov, Kursk, and Belgorod Oblasts. The inhabitants of Orlov Oblast also expressed a desire to take part in this. Judge for yourselves. These oblasts have practically everything: There is ore in Belgorod and Kursk, steel in Lipetsk, mechanical engineering and electronics plants in Voronezh, and a well-established

agricultural complex in Tambov; in addition to all of which, the area contains the richest Black Earth in the world. In principle, all this would be sufficient to run a completely independent economy. If in the past all this was mercilessly removed, then today it has become the object of trade for producers. That is why the idea of forming this association was received with such enthusiasm, and in its turn was supported and approved by the RSFSR President, Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin. The head of the Voronezh Oblast, Viktor Kirilovich Kalashnikov, was elected chairman of the association, and Voronezh was selected as the location for the headquarters of the newly created association.

I think the fog which is blanketing Voronezh today will not descend upon the good work planned by these enterprising people. [end Foshenko recording]

Bashkir Congress Declares Policy Objectives

PM0301104992 Moscow SOVetskaya Rossiya
in Russian 26 Dec 91 p 2

[Correspondent M. Nerzabekov report: "Congress of Bashkir People"]

[Text] The sixth, extraordinary, All-Bashkir Congress, in which delegates and guests representing three dozen regions of the Russian Federation and the former USSR participated, has ended in Ufa after three days' work. The congress discussed the report "On the Sociopolitical and Socioeconomic Situation in Bashkortostan," which was delivered by M. Kulsharipov, chairman of the Bashkir people's center "Ural." M. Rakhimov, chairman of the Bashkir Soviet Socialist Republic [SSR] Supreme Soviet, and M. Mirgazyamov, chairman of the Bashkir SSR Council of Ministers, took part in and addressed the congress. Congress participants expressed sharp criticism of leaders of the legislative and executive powers for omissions and mistakes made by those organs in work to ensure the fuller realization of Bashkortostan's sovereignty.

The congress sent a proposal to the RSFSR Supreme Soviet to accelerate the adoption of an equitable treaty between Russia and Bashkortostan, expressed disagreement with the draft RSFSR Constitution, which envisages eliminating the former autonomous formations using referendums, urged the public to seek amendments to the declaration on the state sovereignty of the Bashkir SSR, which talks about the dual-subject status [dvukhsobyektivnost] of the republic, and demanded that the Bashkortostan Supreme Soviet return to the question of elections of the republic's president and resolve the question of the status of the Bashkir language as the state language in the republic.

The congress elected the Bashkir People's Congress, which proclaimed constitutional methods of activity for the purpose of protecting the interests and the unification of all the peoples living in the republic.

East Siberian, Far East Cossacks Form Union

PM0201144592 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian
20 Dec 91 Union Edition p 1

[Untitled report from IZVESTIYA, TASS, INTERFAX, POSTFACTUM, RIA, REUTERS roundup]

[Text] The Cossacks of East Siberia and the Far East have decided to amalgamate in a single union.

Plenipotentiary representatives of the Yenisey, Irkut, Transbaykal, Ussuri, and Amur Cossack hosts and also of the Aga-Buryat and Upper Uda sections of the Transbaykal host and the Yakutsk Cossack Regiment have signed an agreement on the creation of a union and chosen the appointed hetman.

Oil Extraction in Siberia, Tyumen Declines

LD0501174192 Moscow Radio Rossii Network
in Russian 1000 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Text] Siberian oil extraction declined in 1991 by 50 million tonnes compared with 1990 to a total of 305 million tonnes. According to preliminary estimates, the extraction of oil in Tyumen Oblast will also continue to decline this year. An RIA correspondent was told this by

Yuriy Lisovoy, first deputy head of administration of the Tyumen Oblast for economic issues.

According to specialists, it is necessary to completely modernize without delay all the Tyumen oil fields, where the equipment is worn out and obsolete. An opportunity for this has arisen since Russian President Boris Yeltsin has issued a decree that starting this year Tyumen Oblast and its oil-extracting enterprises will control the sale of 20 percent of extracted oil, which can be sold abroad.

N. Ossetian Minister Kantimirov Lifts Curfew

LD0401161692 Moscow Teleradiokompanii Ostankino
Television First Program Network in Russian
1300 GMT 4 Jan 92

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] In connection with the stabilization of the situation around the capital of the North Ossetian Soviet Socialist Republic, as of today, by order of Major-General Kantimirov, North Ossetian internal affairs minister, the curfew has been lifted in the state of emergency zone with the exception of the village of Tarskoye. Overall, the socio-political situation in North Ossetia remains extremely tense.

National Affairs

Kravchuk Comments on Nuclear Control

PM0501210792 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA
in Russian 3 Jan 92 Single Edition p 3

[UKRINFORM-TASS report under "Direct Line" rubric: "Kravchuk: Process of Creating Ukrainian Armed Forces Starts 3 January"]

[Text] Kiev, 2 Jan—"The meeting of the heads of independent states in Minsk was not an easy one. Discussion of questions of military policy took up most of our time and effort," Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk has told an UKRINFORM correspondent.

He noted that the Ukraine will start the process of creating its own armed forces 3 January. This decision was adopted and signed by the heads of all the states. Moreover, the Ukraine joined the Commonwealth—and this was recognized by the heads of all the states—as a nonnuclear, permanently neutral country. It is planned to remove tactical nuclear weapons from Ukrainian territory by 1 July 1992 and strategic nuclear weapons by 1994. In the intervening time, the Ukraine will exercise rigid control to ensure the nonuse and nonemployment of nuclear weapons, and its president will have special technical control to ensure that no one ever uses nuclear weapons from Ukrainian soil. I am satisfied most of all with this, Leonid Kravchuk stressed.

Soviet Troops Subordinated to Kiev Leaders

LD0301133692 Kiev Radio Kiev Network
in Ukrainian 2000 GMT 2 Jan 92

[Text] All former Soviet Union troops deployed in the Ukraine are switching to direct subordination to the republic's president and defense minister beginning 3 January, with the exception of strategic nuclear forces subordinate to joint command of the Commonwealth of Independent States. The list of the units comprising the strategic forces will be defined by a working group. The list will shorten as nuclear weapons in the Ukraine are destroyed. All Black Sea Fleet forces, including nuclear ones, are also transferred to Ukrainian jurisdiction.

Soldiers Prepare To Swear Allegiance Oath

LD0301224192 Moscow Teleradio Kompanii Ostankino
Television First Program Network in Russian
1900 GMT 3 Jan 92

["Novosti" report by correspondent V. Lyaskalo—recorded]

[Text] The process of creating our own armed forces begins in the Ukraine on 3 January. In Kiev military okrug, young soldiers are preparing for the solemn ceremony of taking the oath of allegiance. This year's recruits are all mainly from the Ukraine and are completing their military service here. We have been informed by the okrug headquarters that the swearing-in of the officer

corps has been set for 18 and 19 January. True, many officers, before swearing allegiance to the Ukraine, hope to obtain from the Ukrainian Government guarantees of social protection. The opinion among the officers is that in the present case there is a possibility that their centuries-old code of honor may be violated—it has never anywhere been the custom to take the oath of allegiance twice. Is this not incompatible with the oath?

[Boriskin, chief of staff of the Ukraine Military District] No. We swore allegiance to the people, the Soviet people, which included the Ukrainian people. We are ready to defend both the Ukraine and the states that now comprise the Commonwealth.

Oath Timetable Noted

LD0501210192 Moscow Teleradiokompanii Ostankino
Television First Program Network in Russian
1645 GMT 5 Jan 92

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] Today our agency learned the timetable for taking the oath of allegiance to the people and independence of the Ukraine.

In Odessa Military District the soldiers will swear on 12 January; the officer corps on 18 and 19 January.

In Transcarpathian Military District—on 19 January.

In Kiev Military District the soldiers will swear on 5 and 6 January; senior soldiers and officers on 18 and 19 January.

The agency has no information on the Black Sea Fleet as yet.

Oath-Taking Ceremony Postponed

OW0401220592 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1942 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Transmitted by KYODO]

[Text] IF [INTERFAX] has learned that the ceremony of oath-taking by the Armed Forces personnel stationed on Ukrainian territory set by Ukrainian Defense Minister Konstantin Morozov for January 5 has been postponed until another time.

The reason for the postponement is the lack of legislative acts determining the status of the Ukrainian Armed Forces servicemen.

Non-Ukrainians account for more than 50 [percent] of the personnel deployed in the Ukraine. Some of them would possibly like to continue serving in other Commonwealth states.

Regiment Declines Oath Until Law Passed

OW0501142292 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1330 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Transmitted by KYODO]

[Text] A helicopter regiment stationed in the city of Alexandria in the Kirovograd region has declined to pledge allegiance to the Ukrainian people until a law on army service is passed.

A general meeting of officers and warrant officers on Saturday [4 January] night appealed to the Ukrainian president, parliament and defense minister, as well as the Commonwealth Armed Forces commander Marshal Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov to define the structure and strength of the Ukrainian armed forces and the procedure for their reduction before the servicemen took their oath of enlistment.

The regiment maintains that the republic's parliament should urgently pass a law on the status and social protection of servicemen and their families and prescribe a procedure for those military unwilling to serve in the Ukrainian army to retire on pension and be provided with housing in the republic or allowed to move to other Commonwealth states.

Pilots of the Alexandria-based helicopter regiment were among those sent to Chernobyl on the night of 26 April 1986—a few hours after one of the local nuclear power plant's reactors went out of control.

Fleet Units Said To Refuse Oath

LD0501175692 Moscow Teleradiokompanii Ostankino
Television First Program Network in Russian
1645 GMT 5 Jan 92

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] The creation of a Ukrainian army already can be considered a fait accompli. The troops stationed in the Ukraine, apart from strategic nuclear forces, now number approximately 470,000.

The most contentious issue remains the Black Sea Fleet. The IMMA-PRESS news agency quotes former USSR People's Deputy Belozertsev as saying that a number of crews and ships of the Red Banner Black Sea Fleet have refused to swear an oath to the Ukraine.

We cannot confirm or refute this information, but it is obvious that the talks on the status of the Black Sea Fleet will be difficult. Both sides say there will be no confrontation, clearly recalling the fate of the Black Sea Fleet in Sevastopol that was sunk deliberately in 1918 to prevent it from falling into the Germans' hands.

Talks on Units' Transfer 'Not Going Easily'

PM0501165192 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA
in Russian 4 Jan 92 Single Edition p 1

[Report by correspondents Colonel V. Kaushanskiy and Colonel A. Polyakov under "Direct Line" rubric: "Intended That Units Start Taking Ukrainian Oath 5 January"]

[Text] Kiev, 3 Jan—Talks are continuing between the group of officers and generals from Moscow headed by Colonel General B. Pyankov and the leadership of the republic on the transfer of Soviet Army units and combined units to Ukrainian Defense Ministry command, and on the numerical strength of these units. Judging by the information available to us, the talks are not going easily. In the Ukraine it is thought that the strategic deterrence forces should be made up of a minimum number of troops, while the rest should go into the republic armed forces being set up.

It should be noted that Ukrainian Defense Minister General K. Morozov has urged all servicemen serving in the Ukraine to conduct the process of reforming the armed forces in a calm atmosphere and in full accord with the people, who have expressed their desire to have their own army. It is intended to start on 5 January the phased administration of the Ukrainian oath in the units and subunits of the three military districts in the Ukraine and in the Black Sea Fleet.

Defense Minister on Black Sea Fleet Control

OW0401220492 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1942 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Transmitted by KYODO]

[Text] Ukrainian Defense Minister Konstantin Morozov told a news conference in Kiev Saturday [4 January] that "the Black Sea Fleet should belong to Ukraine and make up part of the republican armed forces." Noting that the Fleet's fate will be discussed at a meeting with Commander-in-Chief of the Commonwealth Armed Forces Marshal Shaposhnikov in Kiev, Mr. Morozov however said he disapproves of talks on this issue with other Commonwealth member states.

As IF [INTERFAX] reported in its today's edition for 18:00, speaking at a news conference in Moscow Saturday [4 January], Marshal Shaposhnikov described the demands that the Black Sea Fleet be transferred to Ukraine as "hasty". He said the Black Sea Fleet is part of strategic forces.

Mr. Morozov also said that on January 8 the Ukrainian parliament will meet with a large group of Black Sea Fleet officers demanding its transfer to Ukraine.

Mr. Morozov noted that none of the military servicemen will be forced to take an oath of allegiance to Ukraine. He added that Ukraine is currently holding talks with some of the Commonwealth states on possible exchange of military servicemen stationed in Ukraine for Ukrainians serving in these states.

On Strategic Issues, Military Oath

LD0401205592 Moscow TASS International Service
in Russian 1902 GMT 4 Jan 92

[By UKRINFORM correspondent Sergey Balykov]

[Text] Kiev, 4 Jan (TASS)—There will be no confrontation over the affiliation of armed forces of the former Union. This is the view of Ukrainian Defense Minister Colonel General Konstantin Morozov, who took part in a news conference here today. The composition of strategic forces in the Ukraine has not yet been precisely defined, the minister said. He acknowledged also that there are divergences of position between the Ukraine and the military command of the former Union on the question of the Black Sea Fleet. But in his words, the Ukrainian Ministry of Defense intends "to continue to resolve" all contentious issues "through talks, on the basis of the laws of the Ukraine and taking into account counter-proposals from interested parties."

It was stated at the news conference that the Ukraine's stance on defense issues "won support at the Minsk gathering, where all the initiatives in it were implemented." Konstantin Morozov noted that the Ukraine is willing to accept help from other states in destroying nuclear weapons on its territory. The Ukraine reaffirmed its non-nuclear status at Minsk, but for the time being will participate in the combined strategic forces command to exercise control over nuclear weapons and not allow their use from its own territory.

In two weeks, the minister said, the personnel of all, including the strategic, forces will swear an oath of allegiance to the Ukraine. He described media reports that some military units are refusing to swear the new oath as "not corresponding to the facts."

[Moscow INTERFAX in English at 1740 GMT on 4 January adds the following: "The Ukrainian Defence Minister Konstantin Morozov has said that the commander-in-chief of the armed forces of the Commonwealth, Marshal Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov, is expected to arrive in Kiev 'today or tomorrow' for talks on the strategic forces and the Black Sea Fleet.

["The Ukrainian Defence Minister has told a news conference in Kiev that the republican parliament strongly disapproved of the fact that Marshal Shaposhnikov sent his own version of the oath of allegiance to the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] to the Kiev, Odessa and Carpathian military districts and the Black Sea Navy on January 3. Morozov said that oath-taking in Ukraine had been slowed down, because many units did not know who they should be loyal to. The Ukrainian Defence Minister dismissed the rumour that on January 3 many units stationed in Ukraine refused to take the oath of allegiance to its people."]

Addresses Servicemen

LD0301162892 Moscow TASS International Service
in Russian 1522 GMT 3 Jan 92

[By UKRINFORM correspondent Sergey Balykov]

[Text] Kiev, 3 Jan (TASS)—"We have been given great trust to go with our people from the very beginning of the

history of their independence." Ukrainian Defense Minister Konstantin Morozov addressed servicemen stationed on the republic's territory in the NARODNAYA ARMIYA newspaper today.

The creation of statehood and one of its most important structures, armed forces, says the address, is taking place by means of reforming the Armed Forces with the participation of the citizens of the Ukraine. We will create a people's army of the Ukraine. Our task is to provide all the conditions to enable this process to take place peacefully, in full agreement with the people, Konstantin Morozov stresses.

The address goes on to note: "We are getting down to swearing oaths of loyalty to the people of the Ukraine, and we view this ritual as an oath to people who have chosen for themselves a path to good and accord in their state and to a nuclear-free world in relations with other peoples".

Supreme Soviet Opens; Fokin May Resign

LD0401053692 Moscow Radio Rossii Network
in Russian 0430 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Text] A Supreme Soviet session originally planned for 20 January opens today by decision of the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet Presidium.

Talk is circulating in the corridors of the Supreme Soviet that Ukrainian Prime Minister Vitold Fokin will resign in the next few days and that Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk will head the government.

Deputies Oppose Fokin's Economic Proposals

LD0401223692 Moscow TASS International Service
in Russian 1926 GMT 4 Jan 92

[By UKRINFORM-TASS correspondent Aleksey Petrunya]

[Text] Kiev, 4 Jan (TASS)—Today, the final day of the fourth session of the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet, the deputies debated what is currently the most controversial issue of all—social protection for the public and consumer market as prices are liberalized. Probably not a single deputy who spoke gave any kind of support for the program with which the government plans to support the interests of the Ukrainian people.

The program was set out today by Prime Minister Vitold Fokin, who stressed that price liberalization requires parliament and government to find new forms of social protection for the people. Some deputies suggested introducing ration cards for certain products, as has been done by other republics of the former Union. Others wanted the ruble to be totally replaced with reusable coupons. It was even proposed to impose an economic state of emergency, and there were demands for the Ukraine Cabinet of Ministers to resign.

In a further speech, Vitold Fokin said that he was not surprised that no deputy had supported his program. He stressed that a struggle for power and for the prime minister's post is now taking place. His belief is that the Ukraine will be able to replace rubles with coupons no earlier than March. The Supreme Soviet accepted a proposal by Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk to take account of today's debate, draw conclusions and analyses, and take account of all the suggestions made in a general policy package.

Nonetheless, the session ruled that the Cabinet of Ministers must improve the system of social protection for the public and the domestic market on the basis of deputies' suggestions, as well as define the minimum wage in the republic as 400 rubles. The next session, the fifth, opens 28 January.

Resolution on Presidential Pay, Privileges

*LD0501115592 Moscow Radio Rossii Network
in Russian 0900 GMT 5 Jan 92*

[Text] The Ukrainian Supreme Soviet has adopted a resolution on the provision of services and protection for the republic's president.

The president's salary is set at a level of 22 times the minimum wage, which is at present 8,800 rubles. While he remains in office, he is to be provided with an out-of-town residence, an apartment in Kiev, a specially equipped aircraft and helicopter, and motor transport. Protection of the Ukrainian president and his family is provided by the presidential security service. There are provisions for the medical care of the head of state and his wife.

After retirement his official salary and most of his other privileges will be retained for life.

Trade Union Protests Price Liberalization

*LD0301214492 Moscow TASS in English
2032 GMT 3 Jan 92*

[By UKRINFORM correspondent Aleksey Petrunya]

[Text] Kiev January 3 TASS—The Ukrainian Federation of Independent Trade Unions has launched a strong protest in connection with the failure of the republican president and government to provide preventive social protection of the population under price liberalization conditions.

State power and management bodies are again trying to put the burden of coping with the crisis onto the shoulders of the working people and the whole population, says the protest of the federation council.

The council of the Ukrainian Independent Trade Unions Federation, consistently defending the rights and interests of trade union members and all the working people, demands that the president and the Ukrainian Cabinet of Ministers

- Provide for the fulfillment of Ukrainian laws on state social guarantees,
- Legally establish since January 1, 1992, the minimum wages and salaries at a level no less than the subsistence minimum, estimating it in actual prices, and, in accordance with this, revise the actual rates of tariffs and salaries,
- Provide for the indexation of the population's incomes in accordance with the new minimum wages and salaries,
- Speed up the elaboration and approval of a national program of support to low-paid and the most vulnerable population, and create the necessary infrastructure on the spot,
- Immediately introduce the guaranteed distribution at established norms of essentials sold at fixed state prices.

The presidium of the council of the Ukrainian Independent Trade Unions Federation has called on Ukrainian people's deputies to support the trade unions' stand when considering these issues in the republican Supreme Soviet.

Bank Chairman Says Coupons To Replace Rubles

*LD0601014192 Moscow TASS in English
2022 GMT 5 Jan 92*

[By correspondent Vladimir Suprun]

[Text] Kiev January 5 TASS—"The mass of coupons is now on a par with the mass of rubles, which are in circulation on Ukrainian territory," said Chairman of the Board of the Ukrainian National Bank Vladimir Matvienko, speaking on local television today. According to Matvienko, by February Ukraine will be ready to fully drive the ruble out of the Ukrainian market and replace it with coupons.

Speaking about the convertibility of coupons, Matvienko pointed out that, according to the calculations of Ukrainian specialists, one coupon "will soon be equal to ten rubles, or ten coupons will be equal to one dollar."

Crimea Adopts Draft Constitution, New Name

*LD2812030391 Moscow Radio Rossii Network
in Russian 1100 GMT 27 Dec 91*

[Text] The Supreme Soviet of the Crimean Autonomous Republic has endorsed its draft Constitution. In the future, it will be named the Crimea Republic. The republic's laws must take precedence on its territory, with the exception of cases in which the demarcation of powers between the Ukraine and the Crimea will be stipulated.

The introduction of the post of chairman of the republic, who will be head of state and the executive power, is envisaged.

New Defense Ministry Appointments Made

*LD0101063392 Moscow All-Union Radio First
Program Radio-1 Network in Russian 2000 GMT
31 Dec 91*

[Text] On New Year's Eve, the first appointments were made to leading posts in the Ukrainian Defense Ministry.

The 50-year-old Lt. Gen. Bizhan becomes deputy head of the military department. The first deputy and deputy chief of the Main Staff of the Ukraine's Armed Forces were also appointed. These posts will be headed by Maj. Gen. Zhivitsa and Air Force Maj. Gen. Pankratov.

Belarus**Military Affairs****Unified Command of Nuclear Forces Agreed***LD0301135492 Moscow TASS in English
1326 GMT 3 Jan 92*

[By BELTA-TASS correspondent Vladimir Glod]

[Text] Minsk January 3 TASS—"Belarus' agreement to place strategic nuclear forces, deployed on its territory, under a unified command has been confirmed during the meeting between commander-in-chief of the Commonwealth Armed Forces Air Marshal Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov and chairman of the Belarus Supreme Soviet Stanislav Shushkevich. It was agreed that they may be used, in case of need, only with the consent of the republics' leadership," Belarus Defence Minister Lieutenant-General Petr Chaus told BELTA, commenting on Shaposhnikov's Thursday [2 January] visit to Minsk.

The visit to Belarus is the first of the series Shaposhnikov is to pay to other members of the Commonwealth after the Commonwealth December summit meeting in Minsk. The purpose of these visits is to hold consultations on the spot in order to shape a military policy, finalise the new structures and submit corresponding documents to the next meeting of Commonwealth leaders.

During the Minsk talks Shaposhnikov was unequivocally informed that Belarus intended to have its own army. However, this is not a matter of one day, one month, or even one year. A definite transitional period will be required. The national army will be formed on the basis of the present Belarussian military area and other military contingents and units, deployed on the territory of this sovereign republic. It will ensure the security of Belarus, which is eventually to acquire the status of a nuclear-free neutral state.

Shaposhnikov was also told that a Belarus Defence Ministry would be set up shortly on the basis of the command of the Belarus military area. It will handle all military matters on the territory of this sovereign state with proper account of national interests.

Minister on Shaposhnikov Meeting*LD0301175592 Moscow POSTFACTUM in English
1547 GMT 3 Jan 92*

[From the "Politics" section]

[Text] According to the Belarussian minister for defence, Marshal Shaposhnikov hasn't quite accepted the republican leadership's proposal on creating a republican army on the basis of the Belarussian Military District units. Lieutenant-General Petr Chaus, the republic's minister for defence, told PF [POSTFACTUM] that late January 2, during the meeting with Chairman of the Supreme

Council of the Republic of Belarus Stanislav Shushkevich, Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov also heard a proposal to eliminate the post of the Belarussian Military District commander so that the units stationed on the territory of Belarus went under the command of the Belarussian minister for defence.

During the meeting a number of versions of the oath of enlistment for the units of the republican army were proposed. Their texts, according to Chaus, are not formulated in such rigorous terms as the Ukrainian version. Chaus also said that the creation of the Belarussian army presupposes a transitional period (the term for its creation has not been set so far).

Foreign Affairs**State of Relations With Lithuania Discussed****Work on Interstate Agreement***OW0401145592 Moscow BALTFAX in English
1330 GMT 4 Jan 92*

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] During a working meeting in Minsk, January 3 and 4, chairmen of the Lithuanian and Belarussian parliaments, Vytautas Landsbergis and Stanislav Shushkevich, discussed the current state of bilateral relations, says the official communique. The two leaders stated that the work to draft an inter-state agreement between Belarus and Lithuania should be accelerated and that the joint commission for the demarcation of the borders should work more dynamically. They also found it expedient to set up joint working groups to deal with "specific aspects of the transition to a new stage in cooperation between the two sovereign states".

Stanislav Shushkevich and Vytautas Landsbergis discussed ways of developing the ethnic, cultural and language traditions of Belarussians in Lithuania and of Lithuanians in Belarus, noting that the two republics adhered to the corresponding provisions of the Lithuanian-Belarussian Declaration, signed in Vilnius on December 24, and of the generally-accepted international laws defending the human rights of ethnic minorities.

Border Protocol Signed*LD0401150592 Moscow TASS International
Service in Russian 1355 GMT 4 Jan 92*

[By BELTA-TASS correspondent Larisa Lazar]

[Text] Minsk, 4 Jan (TASS)—A protocol on the future work guidelines in the field of delimitating borders between the Belarus Republic and Lithuania has been signed during the first meeting of the joint commission of the two sovereign states. Belarus was represented at the meeting by I. Moshko, republic's people's deputy. Lithuanian delegation was represented by A. Butkyavichyus, the kray's minister.

Landsbergis Ends Visit

LD0501034592 Vilnius Radio Vilnius in English
2230 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Text] The chairman of the Lithuanian parliament, Vytautas Landsbergis, has ended his two-day working visit to Belarus, where he met with his Belarussian counterpart, Stanislav Shushkevich. The two state officials discussed a package of measures which would give a new impetus to the good-neighborly relations between Lithuania and Belarus, which are closely linked both historically and economically. It was agreed in particular that concrete steps must be taken that will guarantee the rights of ethnic minorities in the two republics.

Interchange of Ambassadors With U.S. Requested

LD0601053892 Minsk Radio Minsk Network
in Belarussian 0400 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Text] Stanislav Shushkevich, leader of the parliament of the Republic of Belarus, has received a personal message from U.S. President George Bush. It contains a request to appoint an ambassador to the United States from the Republic of Belarus. Bush also says that a U.S. ambassador to Belarus will be appointed in the immediate future.

It is planned to open a German consulate in Minsk soon, as well as those of a number of other states. A TASS correspondent has learned from sources concerned that the residences of foreign missions will be located in the holiday settlement of Drazdy, where until recently the top leaders of the republic's Communist Party used to vacation. According to the same information, the Belarus Ministry of Foreign Affairs will soon be moving to the luxury building that previously belonged to the Belarussian Communist Party city committee.

Moldova

Snegur Signs Decree on Soviet Soldiers' Status

LD0501120292 Moscow TASS International Service
in Russian 1102 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Text] Kishinev, 5 Jan (MOLDOVAPRES-TASS)—Moldovan President Mircea Snegur has signed a decree legally regulating the situation regarding servicemen who, of their own accord, leave the service units of the Armed Forces of the former USSR.

The document notes that this category of citizens of Moldova is liable for active military service in the military formations of the Moldovan Ministry of Internal Affairs and units of the republic's frontier troops, and also to alternative service. The time they have spent in the USSR Armed Forces and in socially useful work after leaving their military units will be taken into account.

Decree on Wage Increase, Prices Liberalization

AU3112164991 Bucharest ROMPRES in English
1250 GMT 31 Dec 91

[Text] Bucharest, ROMPRES, 31/12/91—President Mircea Snegur has issued a decree on minimum wages, pensions and scholarships rises, with effect from 1 January 1992, informs MOLDOVA PRES.

Minimum monthly wages will be 400 rubles and indexed proportionate to inflation of prices for consumer goods and services.

Prices for raw materials, consumer goods and services will be liberalized starting 2 January 1992, writes MOLDOVA PRES. A strictly determined list of state-subsidized goods and services will make exception from the rule.

National Security Committee Building Captured

OW0301214992 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1944 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] INTERFAX reports from Kishinev that on Friday [3 January] morning a group of 60 to 70 women and members of the armed units of the Dnestr region had captured the municipal department of the Moldova National Security Committee in the city of Bendery.

Prior to this step, the chief of the department had refused to sign a statement that the department goes over to the Jurisdiction of the Dnestr authorities. By the evening, several hundred Moldovans had gathered around the captured building.

Women Oppose Romanian Unification

LD0401053292 Moscow Radio Rossii Network
in Russian 0300 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Text] On 2 January, central television broadcast information about a statement by Moldovan National Security Minister Anatol Plugaru that sooner or later Moldova would unite with Romania. These words stirred up the whole republic as well as the minister's department.

In Bendery at 0830 on 3 January, women who previously picketed the railway, joined by youths, occupied the local department of the Ministry of National Security. They vacated it only after talks with the town leadership.

This caused Plugaru to explain that the phrase was taken out of context from an interview he gave to the Moldovan newspaper LITERATURA SHIARTA.

Romanians Object to Moldova's Joining CIS

PM0201161592 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian
25 Dec 91 p 5

[TASS report: "On Moldova"]

[Text] Bucharest, 24 Dec—The accession of the Republic of Moldova to the agreement on the creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States has evoked an adverse reaction from a number of opposition formations in Romania. Corneliu Coposu, chairman of the Romanian National Peasants, Christian, Democratic Party, has stressed that the republic's president, Mircea Snegur, should not have signed the Alma-Ata document.

Coposu noted that his party firmly supports the viewpoint of the Moldova People's Front, which believes that Moldova's accession to the Commonwealth "is a step back in the process of the national liberation" of that republic. "We are confident that in a short time this Romanian province will be affiliated to the homeland," C. Coposu said.

Visa-Free Travel to Romania Introduced

PM0301121192 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian
20 Dec 91 Union Edition p 1

[Untitled report from IZVESTIYA, TASS, INTERFAX, POSTFACTUM, RIA, REUTERS roundup]

[Text] Visa-free arrangements between Romania and Moldova are being introduced as of 25 December 1991.

To cross the border of their neighboring state, 65 percent of whose population is made up of ethnic Romanians, citizens of Romania will need to have on them only an identity card.

CIS Chief of Staff Arrives for Talks

AU0401181692 Bucharest Radio Romania Network
in Romanian 1603 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Text] Today, 4 January, Marshal Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov, commander in chief of the Commonwealth of Independent States [CIS] Armed Forces, arrived in the Republic of Moldova. During the planned meeting with President Mircea Snegur the sides will discuss issues regarding the distribution of staff and equipment of the former Soviet Army.

Snegur Sends Message to UN Secretary-General

OW0301154692 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1409 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] President of Moldova, Mr. Mircea Snegur, has sent a message of greetings to the UN Secretary-General, Mr. Butros Ghali, to mark his taking of office. The message says, among other things, that as an independent state Moldova has been recognized by 42 UN member-states and will seek membership of the world community as its first-priority goal. The message also says that Moldova recognizes the principles set forth in the UN Charter. In this connection, the Moldovan president expressed hope that Mr. Ghali would help Moldova attain this goal.

Democratic Party Sends Message to Yeltsin

AU2812163491 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 1557
GMT 28 Dec 91

[Text] Chisinau [Kishinev] (ROMPRES) 28/12/1991—The Presidium of the Democratic Party for the Rebirth and Prosperity of Moldova sent to MOLDOVA PRES for release a message to the President of the Russian Federation Boris Yeltsin which shows that "in Moldova there is understanding for your permanent stress on the fact that Russia's relations with the former union republics will develop account being taken inter alia of the extent to which they will ensure the rights of the Russians and of all ethnic minorities in those republics.

"Appreciating this aspect of your stand on the respective matter, however, many people in Moldova consider with good reason that Russia would contribute to a greater extent to the establishment of peace, to the restoration of people's confidence in future if you, just as other leaders of Russia, giving up the preconceived opinion that everywhere the Russians are persecuted, urged with equal firmness the ethnic minorities in the independent states of the former union, actually populations of Russian origin, to abide by the local laws and show understanding for the aspirations of the peoples that have been living on their lands from ancient times and with which they have shared bread and salt [quotation marks as recieved].

Next, the message assesses that an appeal from Yeltsin to the Russian speaking population in the independent republics of the former union could exclude the phenomena that bear negatively on the state of interethnic relations. As far as Moldova is concerned, the message stresses, such an urge would exclude, for instance, the sending of financial means from regions of Russia to support the anti-Moldovan strikes in Transdnistria, the sending of Cossack volunteers and armed detachments to back the separatists in Tiraspol, the continuous attempts of part of mass media to tendentiously mirror many events in the Republic of Moldova.

Starting from the generally acknowledged norms of relations among friendly peoples and countries, we consider that the Moldovans are entitled to expect from the leadership of Russia, from you personally Mr. President a proper reaction to these questions, the message reads in conclusion.

Independence Recognized by Over 30 States

OW0301201492 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1723 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Over 30 countries, among them Sweden, Germany, France and Italy, have announced their recognition of the Republic of Moldova, said the Moldovan Foreign Minister Nicolae Tsiu in an interview for the republican radio. He said Moldova would open 17-20

embassies on all the continents to represent the republic's interests in dozens of countries. Nearly 40 specialists for the Moldovan Foreign Ministry are being trained in a diplomatic school in Romania, Mr Tsiu said.

Belgium, Vietnam Recognize Independence

*AU0501170092 Bucharest ROMPRES in English
1512 GMT 5 Jan 92*

[Text] Bucharest, ROMPRES, 5/1/1992—Mr. Ion Chebuk, first deputy prime minister of the Republic of Moldova, permanent representative of the Republic of Moldova's Government to Moscow, received the visit of Messrs. Eddie Weyena, [name as received] diplomat at Belgium's Embassy in Moscow, and Ziong Dak Zung, [name as received] councillor at the Moscow Embassy of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, who handed him over notes of recognizing the independence and sovereignty of the Republic of Moldova by the two countries, expressing at the same time the wish to act for the development of the bilateral collaboration.

Germany Recognizes Moldova

*LD0301143992 Moscow TASS in English 1334 GMT
3 Jan 92*

[Text] Kishinev January 3 TASS—Germany recognised Moldova as an independent state and hopes the country will observe all international treaties. In a telegramme, received here on Friday [3 January], German President

Richard von Weizaecker told his Moldovan counterpart Mircea Snegur that in recognising Moldova Germany believes its government will guarantee human and minorities' rights and will abide by the provisions of the U.N. and Paris charters, as well as by the Helsinki Final Act. The inviolability of borders should be observed and all disputed problems solved by peaceful means.

Germany is ready to establish diplomatic relations with Moldova and start negotiations on the issue, Weizaecker said.

Snegur Hopes for 'More Tangible' Integration

*AU0101160192 Bucharest Radio Romania Network
in Romanian 0500 GMT 1 Jan 92*

[Text] In an interview granted to our radio station, President Mircea Snegur referred to the problems the Republic of Moldova will face in 1992 along with the transition on 2 January to the application of the reforms in the national economy. He also expressed the desire that relations between our peoples and countries be continued and deepened, as well as the firm conviction that it will be a year of proceeding toward more tangible actions in the cultural and economic integration process.

In conclusion, he wished the Romanian people that 1992 be a year of peace and conveyed to them the traditional New Year's wishes.

Kazakhstan**Presidential Decree Frees Prices, Tariffs***LD0301213792 Moscow TASS in English
2119 GMT 3 Jan 92*

[By KAZTAG correspondent Konstantin Borodinov]

[Text] Alma-Ata January 3 TASS—Free prices and tariffs on production and technical items and consumer goods, works and services will be introduced on January 6 in Kazakhstan, according to a decree of President Nursultan Nazarbayev.

The decree is expected to contribute to the stabilization of social and economic situation in the republic and create conditions for the formation of market relations there.

State purchases of agricultural products will also be made at market prices.

At the same time, state-regulated prices will remain on some product types, including electricity and heating, various types of fuel, precious metals and alloys, specific sorts of bread, milk, sugar, vegetable oil, gasoline and other prime necessities.

The maximum level of price and tariff rise has been established, as well as coefficients of their increase. For instance, fuel prices will go up by 3-5 times, and transportation fees by 5-8 times. The maximum tariffs on bread, cereals, milk and sugar will rise approximately threefold. Prices on medicines will be raised by four times.

The decree envisages the coordination with the Commonwealth member countries of a list of goods and products, the payments for which are expected to be done at world prices.

Further on Decree*OW0501143492 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1330 GMT 5 Jan 92*

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] President Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan has issued a decree freeing prices and tariffs in the republic as of January 6.

The prices of some industrial and technical operations and basic consumer goods and services will remain under government control, including the prices of electric and thermal energy, coal, oil, natural and liquified gas, kerosene, precious metals and alloys, precious stones, cargo transportations and basic communication services.

The decree imposes maximum coefficients for the current prices of industrial and technical goods: energy coal

- 5 coking coal - 8 oil and associated petroleum gas - 5 gas condensate and natural gas - 5 electric and thermal energy - 4

Republic Seeks UN Status, Assumes Commitments*LD0401022992 Moscow TASS International
Service in Russian 2323 GMT 3 Jan 92*

[By correspondent Mikhail Kochetkov]

[Excerpt] United Nations, 4 Jan (TASS)—Kazakhstan has sent a statement on seeking admittance as a member of the United Nations. The letter to the UN secretary general from President Nursultan Nazarbayev points out that "the republic of Kazakhstan assumes the commitments contained in the regulations of the UN Organization and solemnly undertakes to fulfill them."

This letter was handed over to the UN Security Council, which, following the established procedure, will recommend that the UN General Assembly admit a new member. [passage omitted]

New Foreign Minister Discusses Policy Goals*OW0401171992 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1446 GMT 4 Jan 92*

["Diplomatic Panorama" feature; transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Tolevtay Suleymenov is reported to have been appointed Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan. Mr. Suleymenov told DP [Diplomatic Panorama] that at the Minsk summit on December 30, the Commonwealth foreign ministers discussed joint use of the dissolved Union's embassies and consulates.

He said that Kazakhstan would establish diplomatic relations with the rest of the Commonwealth member-states shortly. He said that embassy facilities, as well as fixed assets and movable property, presently under Russia's jurisdiction, would have to be shared.

At the summit the Commonwealth foreign ministers were asked to present to the heads of state their proposals for the collective use of all of USSR Foreign Ministry assets abroad by the former Union republics. Kazakhstan's share has not been estimated yet. The Commonwealth foreign ministers will discuss this question at the beginning of January.

About his ministry's plans, Mr. Suleymenov said that in the wake of the recognition of Kazakhstan's independence by other states, his republic would conclude appropriate agreements with them or exchange notes on the establishment of diplomatic relations. He also said that the republic would seek to become a full-fledged member of the UN and that it had already sent a corresponding request to the UN Secretary-General.

Now that Kazakhstan is independent, the question of the Foreign Ministry's status stands tall, Mr. Suleymenov

said. It will be a leading government body and its staff will be noticeably increased, which will require considerable spending.

Constitution Commission Holds First Meeting

OW0301192492 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1802 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Kazakhstan's first commission for the elaboration of the republican constitution took place in Alma-Ata on Friday [3 January] under the stewardship of the Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev. After a report by the expert group, Mr. Nazarbayev concentrated on human rights, private property and new economic relations.

An exact schedule for the adoption of Kazakhstan's constitution have yet to be passed. Its architects plan to have a draft constitution in place next winter.

Mr. Nazarbayev does not rule out the possibility of a referendum on the new fundamental law.

Kyrgyzstan

Decrees Liberalize Prices, Set Minimum Wage

OW0401193192 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1740 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Text] Kyrgyzstan has liberalized the prices of foodstuffs, manufactures, farm produce and services. The president of Kyrgyzstan issued a decree on pricing on Saturday [4 January].

The prices have been up 200% to 400%.

The prices of coal, gas, crude oil, other fuels, energy, precious metals, freight and passenger transportation services and basic foodstuffs, such as milk, bread, vegetable oil, baby-food and alcohol are fixed.

The president of Kyrgyzstan has signed a decree on additional measures to support the population in connection with the new pricing policies. The minimum wage and pension is set at 350 roubles. The employees of education and health service establishments, scientific and cultural workers and members of law-enforcement agencies and other government-financed bodies will have their pay doubled.

The same decree provides for opening a large chain of trading and consumer cooperatives in order to ease food shortages.

Foreign Minister Outlines Priorities

OW0401180792 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1446 GMT 4 Jan 92

["Diplomatic Panorama" report; transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Kyrgyzstan's Foreign Minister Muradbek Imaniliyev has said that ideology will not play any role in the foreign policy of his independent republic. Imaniliyev has told DP [Diplomatic Panorama] that relations with neighbouring countries will be one of Kyrgyzstan's priorities. He recalled that Kyrgyzstan had old-time cultural and historical ties with many of them.

However, Imaniliyev believes that political contacts with European countries would be very useful to Kyrgyzstan as a newly-founded democracy. He noted in particular the openness of European countries and the way they assured human rights and the rights of minorities.

Imaniliyev recalled that more than 40 countries had already recognized Kyrgyzstan and were ready to establish diplomatic relations with it. The United States, China and Turkey are among them. Currently the Foreign Ministry of Kyrgyzstan is preparing documents for the establishment of full-fledged diplomatic relations and for exchanging ambassadors with these and other countries. Imaniliyev believes that Kyrgyzstan may open ten embassies already this year.

Imaniliyev dealt at length upon the Foreign Ministry's financial problems, for instance, Kyrgyzstan's share of the assets of the former USSR Foreign Ministry, which will be vital to opening diplomatic missions abroad. Imaniliyev said that Kyrgyzstan would bring up this issue with the Russian Foreign Ministry officials. However, Imaniliyev believes that at first Kyrgyzstan's diplomatic missions abroad may operate at Russian embassies.

Imaniliyev said that the Kyrgyz Foreign Ministry had purely personnel problems, too. Kyrgyzstan hopes to invite career diplomats from the former USSR Foreign Ministry to work on contract. Imaniliyev believes that it will take them three or four years to help Kyrgyz diplomacy find its feet.

President Attends First German Congress

LD0501020592 Moscow Mayak Radio Network
in Russian 1419 GMT 4 Jan 92

["Panorama" feature]

[Excerpts] One event we would like to tell you about took place in Bishkek today. The first congress of Germans from Kyrgyzstan is taking place there. My colleague, correspondent Aleksandr Mirtov, promised us a live report on this:

[Mirtov] [passage omitted] There are now about 100,000 Germans living in Kyrgyzstan. Throughout the years they have lived in peace and harmony with Kyrgyz, Russian, and Ukrainian peoples. On Kyrgyz soil they shared with other peoples the joys and hardships of our life. About 30,000 people from the republic have emigrated to Germany and other countries in recent years.

In his speech to the congress today, Kyrgyzstan President Askar Akayev did not hide his disappointment, because

the Germans leaving the republic for their ancestral homeland are, unquestionably, industrious and knowledgeable specialists. Nevertheless, the president of the republic stressed that the leadership of Kyrgyzstan will not create any obstacles whatsoever for those who do decide to leave Kyrgyzstan. Ultimately, every individual is entitled to choose the place he wants to live. Nevertheless, the problem of emigration and other issues connected with Germans in Kyrgyzstan were the subjects of speeches by many delegates. [passage omitted]

The delegates suggested a number of specific measures to help resolve these problems. Among other things, they suggested that Germans living in Kyrgyzstan and those who have emigrated to Germany should be granted the right to dual citizenship. They called for the simplification of entry and exit procedures for citizens travelling to Germany from Kyrgyzstan and vice versa, on business or for private purposes, at the invitation of relatives and so on. The establishment of a Kyrgyz-German land bank was proposed, as well as a trade house operating as a joint venture and a joint tourism firm. It has to be said that all of these problems are long-term ones. It is virtually impossible to resolve them today or tomorrow.

["Panorama" reporter] Excuse me, Sasha. Was there any reaction to these proposals? Or, as usually happens, was it a case of neutrality being declared?

[Mirtov] No. In his speech, Askar Akayev supported many of these proposals. In particular he said that diplomatic relations would soon be established between Kyrgyzstan and Germany, probably this year—if not at the ambassadorial level, then at the consulate level. This will also help to some extent in resolving all these problems.

I would also like to mention that the minister at the German Embassy, Herr Hagen, who is deputy to Germany's extraordinary and plenipotentiary ambassador in our country, also attended the congress of Germans in Kyrgyzstan and spoke. This speaks volumes. [passage omitted]

["Panorama" reporter] Thank you for your report, Sasha. The figure is, of course, an alarming one. If I am not mistaken, you said that 30,000 out of 100,000 have already left. That is rather alarming.

[Mirtov] Yes, of course.

["Panorama" reporter] It is rather alarming. That is a lot in my view. But, thank goodness, your president and deputies are, generally speaking, tackling the problem in an honest way, are they not?

[Mirtov] Yes, let us hope that the problem will be settled one way or the other.

["Panorama" reporter] Yes, I very much hope so. Thank you for your report. That was my colleague, Aleksandr Mirtov.

Tajikistan

Dushanbe Appeals For Recognition, Relations

LD0601083592 Moscow TASS International Service
in Russian 0710 GMT 6 Jan 92

[Text] Dushanbe, 6 Jan (TAJIKTA-TASS)—The parliament of the republic of Tajikistan has adopted an appeal to the countries of the world community to acknowledge the independence of its republic and establish diplomatic relations with it.

The document stresses that having become a full-fledged member of the Commonwealth of Independent States and acting in its capacity as a subject of international law, sovereign Tajikistan affirms its loyalty to the principles of the UN Charter, the Helsinki Final Act, the Paris Charter, and other documents of the CSCE. It states its desire to create a democratic, law-governed state ensuring defense of the honor and value of each citizen and guaranteeing to observe the rights of the peoples, ethnic groups, and national minorities inhabiting the republic.

The Supreme Soviet of the republic of Tajikistan also affirms the inviolability of the borders existing between states and guarantees to execute the appropriate international commitments ensuing from the treaties and agreements of the former USSR, including commitments on issues of disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, international security, and regional stability.

More on Nuclear Talks With Pakistan, Others

LD0401140192 Moscow Teleradiokompanii
Ostankino Television First Program Network
in Russian 1300 GMT 4 Jan 92

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] According to an Austrian newspaper, Tajikistan has begun talks with Near Eastern states and Pakistan to sell nuclear materials. However, there has not yet been any confirmation of this report from internal news channels.

Decree Issued on State TV, Radio Formation

LD0301194892 Dushanbe Radio Dushanbe Network
in Tajik 1700 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Decree issued by president of Tajikistan on 3 January on formation of state television and radio corporation under the president of Tajikistan]

[Text] 1. The State Committee for Television and Radio of the republic of Tajikistan will be annulled and the State Television and Radio Corporation under the president of the republic of Tajikistan shall be formed. The main (?resources) and other state property, which until 1 January 1992 were at the disposal of the State Committee for Television and Radio of the republic of

Tajikistan, and all the enterprises and organizations attached to it, shall be given to the new Television and Radio State Corporation;

2. Comrade Sayfulloyev Atakhan Sayfulloyevich is appointed chairman of the State Television and Radio Corporation under the president of the republic of Tajikistan. In line with this (?he) shall be relieved from his duties as chairman of the State Committee for Television and Radio of the republic of Tajikistan;

3. Comrade Sayfulloyev is instructed to forward within two weeks the draft rules for the State Television and Radio Corporation of the republic of Tajikistan to the Cabinet of Ministers of the republic of Tajikistan for approval;

4. The Cabinet of Ministers of the republic of Tajikistan must enter the changes which arise from the current decree to the Acts of the Government of the republic of Tajikistan;

5. This decree comes into force from the moment of its publication.

[Signed] Rahmon Nabiyeu, president of the republic of Tajikistan

New National Guard Chief on Defense Issues

LD0301174192 Moscow All-Union Radio Mayak
Network in Russian 0610 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Interview with Major General (Bakhrom Rakhmanov), Tajik state counselor on issues of defense, national security, and law enforcement bodies, by correspondent Muzafar Madzhidov; place and date not given]

[Text] A new post has appeared in the republic of Tajikistan president's office: state counselor on defense issues, national security, and law enforcement bodies. He is Major General (Bakhrom Rakhmanov), 42. Our correspondent, Muzafar Madzhidov, has interviewed him.

[Begin recording] [Madzhidov] (Bakhrom Immonovich), you have also been appointed commander of the National Guard of the republic of Tajikistan, which is being formed. What are your functions, the counselor's functions?

[(Rakhmanov)] The very term, or title, state counselor on defense issues, national security, and law enforcement bodies and commander of the National Guard already reveals to a certain degree the functions with which the state counselor will deal. In addition, the task of setting up the National Guard, to implement the president's decree, is in the forefront. It is intended that the National Guard will purely guard important state installations and state figures. There will also be a special purpose battalion. We are also planning to have National Guard structures [word indistinct] guards of honor to perform at state events.

[Madzhidov] Are we not going to set up our own army?

[(Rakhmanov)] The position of the republic of Tajikistan was expressed clearly at the conference at the Ministry of Defense. National armies will not be established right now—there is no need for them.

[Madzhidov] In that case, who will safeguard the security of the republic of Tajikistan?

[(Rakhmanov)] This issue was not considered at the Ministry of Defense conference. Nevertheless, the opinion is that there should be unified command of the frontier troops to guarantee the security of the border of the whole Commonwealth of Independent States. The question arises of what will happen if some states have their own armed forces. I believe that in this event the issue of the state border ought to be an exception and be tackled by all the states of the Commonwealth, regardless of whether they set up their own national armies.

Regarding the issue of the republic of Tajikistan's cooperation on all defense matters, let me give you the president's opinion, which is that the first, fundamental conclusion is that we support unified armed forces and are categorically against the establishment of national armies at the present time. This is determined by a number of circumstances that currently dictate the president's decision and opinion. [end recording]

Army Officers Appeal For Rules on Leaving

LD0401014592 Moscow Radio Rossii Network
in Russian 2100 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Text] Officers representing former USSR Defense Ministry units and departments stationed in Tajikistan have forwarded an appeal to the leaders of the Commonwealth of Independent States. Among other things, the appeal contains the following: In the event of Army units coming under the Commonwealth's jurisdiction, service arrangements for officers who do not belong to the indigenous nationality must be defined.

The officers propose that officers be given a guarantee that they will be free to leave for the state of their choice. If this demand is ignored, the officers reserve the right of Tajik Army units to decide on their future for themselves.

General: Anti-Aircraft Defenses 'Inefficient'

LD0601003492 Moscow POSTFACTUM in English
1851 GMT 5 Jan 92

[From the "Politics" section]

[Text] According to strategic group head of center-Asian border district Lieutenant-General Martovitskiy, anti-aircraft defense system is inefficient to protect CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] airspace.

Addressing on January 3 the session of the Tajikistan Supreme Soviet, Anatoliy Marovitskiy confirmed the

official version that on June 4, 1991, at 10.08 an Afghan airforce plane run by Afghan Aviation General Mustafa crossed the Soviet-Afghan border in the Ishkashimskiy District. Martovitskiy reported that on June 4 General Mustafa allegedly received a personal order from Najibollah to bomb the crowds of Ahmatshah Masud's mujahidin near the Afghan Kishlak of Zibar 30 km from the Soviet border. Martovitskiy also reported that Mustafa due to his usual self-confidence, mistook, flying alone, the border river of Pyandzh with the Afghan river of Bartudzh. According to Martovitskiy, at 10.08 a border guards post noticed the unknown aircraft flying over the border line. At 10.12, the same plane was noticed by another post on its return to the airspace of Afghanistan. According to Martovitskiy, the anti-aircraft defense structure should be considerably enlarged mainly in the mountain regions of Tajikistan difficult to access.

Supreme Soviet Opens; Communist Party Restored

LD0401152292 Dushanbe Radio Dushanbe Network in Tajik 1100 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Text] Today the 11th session of the Supreme Soviet of the republic of Tajikistan of the 12th convocation continued its work. The deputies approved the address of the Supreme Soviet of the republic of Tajikistan to all parliaments and states of the world on the (?recognition) of the independence of the republic of Tajikistan. Then Agriculture Minister Wahob Wahidov's report on the temporary suspension of the division of the state and collective farms in the republic of Tajikistan was heard. The deputies then continued examining this question. After a great deal of discussion and examination, the session adopted the decision to suspend on a temporary basis the division of state and collective farms for a period of three years. The session also examined the question of the military service of young people of Tajikistan in the ranks of the armed forces. At the end of the morning session, the peoples deputies heard the

report of Supreme Soviet Deputy Chairman Viktor Ivanovich Pripisnov on tackling the questions related to the implementation of [word indistinct] and the deputies examined it. With this the morning session finished its work.

[Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian at 1200 GMT on 4 January adds the following: "The activity of the Tajikistan Communist Party has been restored in that republic. This was ordered by President Nabiyeu."]

President's Appointive Powers Broadened

OW0501142792 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1330 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Transmitted by KYODO]

[Text] The session of the Tajik Supreme Soviet, earlier planned for January 9, took place in Dushanbe January 3 and 4 and passed an amendment to a local government law that broadens the president's powers in appointment of executive officers.

According to local observers, the change in the schedule may be due to the authorities' concern over possible actions of the opposition. The Democratic Party of Tajikistan, the Islamic Revival Party and the popular movement Rastokhez demand the democratisation of the republican parliament and accuses the legislators that they pass decisions strengthening the administrative and command system in Tajikistan. The opposition plans to hold a rally in Dushanbe in support to its demands.

Saturday [4 January] the parliament gave President Rakhman Nabiyeu the right to appoint, in consultation with local governments, heads of local governments during the next three years. The amendment to the local government law was passed on the sixth vote, reports IF [INTERFAX].

Supreme Council Opens Emergency Session 4 Jan

Karimov Takes Oath of Office

OW0401130692 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1115 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] At the parliamentary session which opened in Tashkent on Saturday [4 January] President-elect Islam Karimov took the oath. Having kissed the Holy Koran, the chairman of the People's Democratic party (formerly Communist) pledged to protect the rights of all the citizens of Uzbekistan.

After the solemn inauguration Uzbek MPs began to discuss the session's agenda and included 23 points in it. They are to ratify documents on forming the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] and a treaty between Uzbekistan and Turkey. Besides, MPs will consider issues connected with recognizing the independence of former Soviet republics and Uzbekistan's emergency budget for the 1st quarter of this year.

The session intends to make amendments and addenda to Uzbekistan's constitution designed to liquidate the vice-presidency and introduce the post of prime minister. At the moment the republic's cabinet of ministers is led by President Islam Karimov.

The session will also consider the issue of cancelling the mandates of USSR people's deputies representing Uzbekistan.

Commonwealth Agreement Ratified

OW0401190492 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1740 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] On Saturday [4 January] an emergency session of the Uzbek Supreme Council ratified by an overwhelming majority of votes the agreement on creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States and corresponding protocols.

IF's [INTERFAX] correspondents report from Tashkent that the Uzbek parliament has also recognized the independence of all former Soviet republics, except Georgia. The deputies will consider the recognition of Georgia's independence after the situation there stabilizes.

The parliament ratified the Uzbek-Turkish treaty signed during Uzbek President's Islam Karimov visit to Istanbul in December.

The session approved a number of amendments to the Uzbek Constitution abolishing the post of vice-president and introducing the post of prime minister. The amendments grant the Council of Ministers the right to legislative initiative.

Speaking in parliament Uzbekistan's President Islam Karimov pointed out that the transition to a market economy cannot be stopped. Still, Mr. Karimov said, the republican leadership will control prices of twelve food items, including bread, flour, butter, sugar, etc. Seven children's goods items will be sold for coupons with compensation payments from the budget.

The session will continue working on January 16.

Armenia**Government Frees Consumer Prices 4 Jan***OW0301213092 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1944 GMT 3 Jan 92*

[Transmitted by KYODO]

[Text] The Armenian parliament decided to free prices in the republic at an extraordinary meeting on Friday [3 January]. The prices will be freed on January 4, says the agency SNARK.

The parliamentarians set the minimum wages and pensions at 280 and 260 rubles, and wages in the public sector will be increased by 150 rubles. A family having children will have benefits of 110 rubles per a child.

Armenian premier Gagik Arutyunyan described the price liberalisation as a body blow to the republican economy by the disintegration of the Soviet empire.

President Addresses Price Liberalization*NC0301211692 Yerevan Radio Yerevan Network
in Armenian 1630 GMT 3 Jan 92*

[Speech by President Levon Ter-Petrosyan to the extraordinary session of the Armenian Supreme Soviet in Yerevan on 3 January—recorded]

[Text] Esteemed deputies, first of all I want to convey my greetings on the occasion of the New Year and to thank you for responding to my request enabling the convocation of the extraordinary session of the Armenian Republic's parliament today with a special agenda.

As should be obvious to you, the measure we want to implement in Armenia, price liberalization, is to a certain extent a forced measure. It is forced in the sense that we cannot but implement it. As you remember, at my swearing-in ceremony I had indicated that we would probably be forced to make the passage to the price liberalization earlier than envisaged. Why? Personal, economic, and international experience shows that it would have been expedient to implement this measure after the introduction of broad economic reforms, privatization, the emergence of a large army of proprietors, and the creation of opportunities for competition, which is the sole guarantee for the production of goods. Only after that would it have been very natural to make the transition to price liberalization.

Today, this logical chain has been disrupted not at our own choice. As I said, this is a forced measure, an imposed measure, and it emanates from Russia's policy. Why did Russia resort to that move? Did they not grasp this economic logic? These things were explained to them, though I am sure there was no need for it as they knew everything well. Apparently, however, they too felt forced to take this step, for all previous attempts to spur economic reforms in Russia produced no results. Even renowned economists such as Shatalin and Yavlinskii

who came forward with their plans, like the 500-day plan, later came forward with separate programs. Each realized in private talks with me that these are half-measures. These were measures emanating from the essence of the administrative command structure. It is an elemental fact that there cannot be a free economic market without free prices. Price liberalization is the foundation of the market economy. They were well aware that it was not possible to create a free market economy and hope for economic progress unless there was price liberalization. Finally, to spur the economic reform, Russia resorted to that step all the while realizing the difficulties involved therein.

The question is what does Russia pin its hopes on? Russia has the same problems that beset Armenia: expensive goods and a limited and insignificant volume of supplies of goods that further diminishes rather than increases. Under these conditions, the prices are set free. It is not difficult to foresee the social discontent.

Nevertheless, Russia has some possibilities. It has reserves, and it was indicated that these will be used. It has reserves ready for mobilization that apparently they will also use. But most important is that Russia has pinned great hopes on its raw materials. By setting prices free, it is forcing the other states of the Commonwealth to liberalize prices, thus forcing them to buy Russia's costly raw materials. The republics will have to pay for them in the form of goods. This is the only way to pay for them. We have been warned that a frightening increase, maybe 10 times or more, in the prices of commodities threaten us. We have received cables from Turkmenia and Russia in this direction. Our conviction that Russia is depending on its raw materials is being validated. They hope to temporarily obtain some goods in return for raw materials in the transitional period and thus put out the fires of social discontent, spur the economic reforms, introduce privatization, and so on. They are thus calculating that, and I do not think they have made serious calculations, they could establish a balance between the prices and production of goods. This is their [word indistinct].

Nevertheless, no matter how much we (?dislike it), we have to take this step, the step of price liberalization. If we do not, we would be losing 30 million rubles a day as of today, and in current prices at that. Our goods would [word indistinct] Russia and the other states. This is only natural. I hope that our entrepreneurs and businessmen would successfully carry out this responsibility. This is the law of trade where no morality prevails. Our Armenian patriotic businessmen would send our goods to wherever they sell at higher prices. This is the law of economics.

We have to be aware of this fact, and as of today we have to think about ways to effectively equalize the consequences of this economic measure as far as it touches Russia and Armenia. Alongside that we have to formulate relevant measures for the protection of our domestic market. In this regard, we have envisaged to create a

customs department of the republic. It will be [word indistinct] a state and republican service and would in no way come under the jurisdiction of the custom services of other states. Although through an agreement we might conduct a [word indistinct] coordinated customs policy with the other members of the Commonwealth, but never under duress. This has been planned and is included in the package of measures I am presenting to the parliament.

You might also be interested to know that some republics, especially the Ukraine for some time now and presently Belarus and Kyrgyzstan, are introducing the so-called coupon system to protect their domestic markets. It should not be forgotten that the Ukraine and particularly Belarus are [word indistinct] republics in terms of goods. An outflow of goods from these republics is taking place. This is not the case in Armenia. Among consumer goods, only footwear is leaving the republic. The rest (?is consumed by us). If we too adopt the coupon system we will suffer. Therefore, there is no need for that system here, and experience shows that such coupons are soon transformed into local currency. Therefore, we have directly [word indistinct]; we have taken serious steps to have our own currency. By the time the coupons in those states are transformed into local banknotes, we would have our own currency. Here, I want to conclude my statement on this matter.

Taking all these facts into account, a package of measures have been drawn up by the joint efforts of our government, specialists, people's deputies, and relevant parliament commissions. For the time being, this package is in the form of presidential decrees. The package includes 13 decrees; there is a 14th one which is purely (?advisory) and involves the establishment of an operative commission.

These 13 decrees are the object of our debate here. What stance should be taken towards these decrees? Among these decrees, there are those which fully come under the jurisdiction of the president of the republic. These decrees could be adopted at the jurisdiction of the president. There are also a few of them outside the jurisdiction of the president and come under the parliament's jurisdictions, in particular as regards taxes and price setting. If you see any contradictions, we have to (?resolve them). There is (?no need) to speak in detail about these decrees. Information has been prepared about them and have been distributed to you. A draft decision of the parliament has been prepared, and we will see if you will adopt that bill. I am ready to accept any version of the bill. It is best that each government organ carry out its duties within the limits of its jurisdictions. That is, the parliament should make its own contribution and the republic's president should act within his jurisdictions. This will be the best. I will be very happy if we agree, if you are convinced that today we are ready to immediately accept some of these decrees as decisions and laws of the Supreme Soviet. Otherwise, taking into consideration that we should not lose time—because each day brings substantial losses to

us—certain jurisdictions must be (?recognized by me) for a period of some months only as regards the implementation of these measures. Certain jurisdictions regarding the formulation of measures on price liberalization should be given to the president. In that case, all responsibility will fall on me, and I am not afraid of that responsibility, because I see that this is an inevitable step and someone has to shoulder that responsibility.

I would like to conclude my address here, but I have to stress one more thing before I end. Within the limits of our possibilities, we have tried to find the optimal social benefits that must be given in connection with price liberalization. [words indistinct] This was all we could do. The minimum wage level, pensions, [words indistinct] for funds, and so on have been established. These matters have been discussed with the chairmen and members of the parliament's commissions, and the optimum level has been ascertained. I request that understanding must be shown to this work. It must be understood that the state, as much as its capabilities allow, will never ignore its obligation to alleviate the burden of our workers.

That is all thank you.

President Granted Additional Economic Powers

LD0401213392 Moscow Mayak Radio Network
in Russian 1900 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Text] The Armenian Supreme Soviet has granted President Levon Ter-Petrosyan additional powers to adopt legislative acts in the field of price policies and taxation. The Armenian legislature has also approved the package of presidential decrees relating to the liberalization of prices and social protection of the population under market conditions, the STUDINFORM news agency reports.

'Appeal' Supports Nagorno-Karabakh Statehood

NC0301224792 Yerevan Radio Yerevan Network
in Armenian 1630 GMT 3 Jan 92

["Text" of Armenian Supreme Soviet "appeal" to the Supreme Soviet of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic; read by Seyran Bagdasaryan, chairman of the Special Commission on Nagorno-Karabakh Affairs, at the extraordinary session of the Armenian Supreme Soviet in Yerevan on 3 January]

The struggle for freedom launched by the Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh four years ago laid the foundation for the national revival of the Armenian people. Based on international law, in particular on the right of self-determination of peoples, the Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh in unison rose up in struggle for the sake of their independence, which was supported by all Armenians and progressive people of the world. In response to that, the authorities of the Soviet Union and Azerbaijan employed military, political, economic, and psychological pressures, in addition to massacres and deportations

of the Armenian population in Azerbaijan, aimed at subjugating Nagorno-Karabakh and maintaining colonialism.

At present, the national liberation struggle of the Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh has entered a new phase: the establishment of statehood. The Armenian Republic Supreme Soviet is convinced that this will proceed in line with well-known international democratic norms, thus placing the defense of the rights of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic's citizens on legal grounds.

The Armenian Republic Supreme Soviet, in the name of all Armenians, assures the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic Supreme Soviet that it will use all its means to buttress the establishment and strengthening of the statehood of the people of Nagorno-Karabakh.

Secretariat Refuses Comment on Gamsakhurdia

*LD0601105292 Moscow Mayak Radio Network
in Russian 1020 GMT 6 Jan 92*

[Text] A telegram from TASS correspondent Tigran Liloyan in Yerevan: The Armenian president's secretariat neither denied nor confirmed for TASS reports that Zviad Gamsakhurdia has arrived in Armenia and refused to comment on reports that he has been granted political asylum. Meanwhile, it was reported there that Ashot Manacharyan, the Armenian president's chief adviser on national security affairs, may appear and give appropriate explanations this evening. He held negotiations in Tbilisi with Zviad Gamsakhurdia, Tengiz Sigua, Tengiz Kitovani, and Dzhaba Ioseliani on 3 January on the invitation of Georgian authorities and the opposition with their mutual consent. The statement from the Armenian president's secretariat says that matters relating to settling the armed conflict in Georgia were discussed at these negotiations.

Azerbaijan

Reportage Highlights Continued NKAO Fighting

President Notes 'Full-Fledged' War

*OW0301214892 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1944 GMT 3 Jan 92*

[Transmitted by KYODO]

[Text] On January 3 Azerbaijan's President Ayaz Mutalibov met with the chiefs executive officers in the regions in which direct presidential rule had been introduced. This rule "is intended to stabilize situation in the mountain portion of Karabakh and the neighbouring areas, to put an end to actions by self-styled unconstitutional armed units and to restore legal power structures on our territories being subjected to aggression," said Mr. Mutalibov.

"War is on in Karabakh," said Azerbaijan's president. "Previously a local conflict, it is escalating into a full-fledged war."

"Azerbaijan has to drive back the attacks of the Armenian army that is equipped with flame-throwers and heavy weapons."

According to him, last week alone several Azeri villages were burned in the mountains and around 6000 Azeris were driven away from their homeland.

"We want peace, but to have peace, Armenia must at least stop aggression against Azerbaijan," said the president. "Weapons are no answer to the problems, and Armenians must understand it."

Villages Stormed, Stepanakert Shelled

*LD0501142292 Moscow TASS International Service
in Russian 1300 GMT 5 Jan 92*

[By ARMENPRES correspondent Loris Gukasyan]

[Text] Yerevan, 5 Jan (TASS)—During the night of 4-5 January, Azerbaijani armed formations again stormed the Armenian villages of Buzlukh and Karachinar, but they were beaten off by self-defense forces.

The missile shelling of Khankendi [Stepanakert], where there is still no electricity or water and virtually no flour, continues. The population has been spending most of the past 24 hours in bomb shelters and cellars. There are no medical supplies in the beleaguered town's hospitals.

Baroness Caroline Cox, deputy speaker of the British Parliament's House of Lords, has arrived to participate in the work of the first session of the Nagorno-Karabakh Supreme Soviet, which is due to open on 6 January.

Supreme Council Session Postponed

*OW0501174492 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1712 GMT 5 Jan 92*

[Transmitted by KYODO]

[Text] Azerbaijani militants again attempted last night to storm the Armenian villages of Buzlukh and Karachinar in the Gheranboy (Shaumyanovsk) district of Azerbaijan. They also attacked the positions of Armenian units guarding the motorway connecting the Gheranboy District with Nagorno-Karabakh, but, according to the press service of the Armenian headquarters, the attacks were rebuffed.

The opening of the first session of the Supreme Council of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic (NKR) recently proclaimed by the Armenian government has been delayed until next Wednesday. Parliamentary elections in the NKR, which embraces the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh and part of the adjacent Gheranboy District of Azerbaijan, were held on December 28. The Azerbaijani government has not only refused to recognize the new republic but also scrapped it as an autonomous entity,

renaming its administrative center Stepanakert Khankendi. A number of other population centers in Karabakh have, too, received Azerbaijani names.

Direct Rule by Mutalibov Ignored

OW0301192392 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1802 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Transmitted by KYODO]

[Text] Nagorno-Karabakh's Armenian leadership has not yet given its response to the Decree by Azerbaijani president Ayaz Mutalibov "On the Introduction of Direct Presidential Rule in Several Districts of Azerbaijan", "LUR", an Armenian news center, reports.

Local observers believe the decree will be simply ignored since the Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh have proclaimed their own Nagorno-Karabakh Republic. Mr. Georgiy Petrosyan, an Armenian MP [member of parliament] from Nagorno-Karabakh, said the only way to implement Mr. Mutalibov's decree was an armed aggression.

Gamsakhurdia Motorcade Said Headed for Baku

LD0601101792 Moscow Radio Rossii Network
in Russian 0900 GMT 6 Jan 92

[Text] The Azerbaijan People's Front information center telephoned the RUSSIAN INFORMATION AGENCY to report that Georgian President Zviad Gamsakhurdia's motorcade, consisting of a Mercedes, a Niva, and a GAZ-61, crossed Azerbaijan's border, heading toward Baku, at 0920 on 6 January. This was reported by Deputy (Samadaguli), a member of the National Council of Azerbaijan, who is in Kazakhskiy Rayon, Azerbaijan, the Azerbaijan People's Front information center reports.

Arrival Confirmed

LD0601122992 Moscow Mayak Radio Network
in Russian 1200 GMT 6 Jan 92

[Text] Georgian President Zviad Gamsakhurdia and his family crossed the border into Azerbaijan, near the town of Kazakh, the RUSSIAN INFORMATION AGENCY reports. The Georgian president's family is in Ganja, Azerbaijan's second largest city, (Yazim Istafayev), director of the Azerbaijani Popular Front's information service, told the agency.

Situation Remains 'Tense' on Railroad

LD0601063592 Moscow TASS International Service
in Russian 0316 GMT 6 Jan 92

[By correspondent Andrey Trotskiy]

[Text] Moscow, 6 Jan (TASS)—The situation on the Azerbaijani railroad, the blockade of which is continuing, remains tense. The Ministry of Railways informed this TASS correspondent that train traffic has

come to a complete halt between Karchivan and Agbent. Trains are continuing to arrive, 80 of which are now idle on this section. Hundreds of tonnes of freight, including foodstuffs and medicines, have accumulated on the tracks.

Iran Opens Embassy, Favors Expanded Ties

OW0501182592 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1712 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Transmitted by KYODO]

[Text] The Iranian Consulate in Baku has been reformed into Iran's Embassy in Azerbaijan. The inauguration ceremony took place on Saturday [4 January]. Ex-Consul Abolqassem Damashqiyeh was appointed Iran's charge d'affaires in Azerbaijan.

One day earlier, President Ayaz Mutalibov had told the visiting Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Mahmud Va'ez that Baku favored the promotion of contacts with Tehran in all spheres.

Iran is supporting Azerbaijan's intention to join the Economic Cooperation Organization uniting Iran, Pakistan and Turkey. The latter two countries welcomed Azerbaijan's plan earlier.

Iran intends to open its consulate also in Nakhichevan, an autonomous republic within Azerbaijan.

IF's [INTERFAX's] correspondent has learned at the Azerbaijani Foreign Ministry that Turkey's Consulate in Baku will soon be turned into an embassy too.

Georgia

Tbilisi Standoff Ends; Gamsakhurdia Escapes

'Amateur Radio' Reports

LD0301140292 Moscow TASS in English 1348 GMT
3 Jan 92

[By Albert Kochetkov]

[Text] Moscow January 3 TASS—Georgian opposition started creating its provisional government on Friday [3 January] by appointing former Prime Minister Tengiz Sigua as its head. The Military Council was also formed, TASS learned from an amateur radio report monitored in Moscow.

President Zviad Gamsakhurdia protested and called on the people to disobey by staging mass strikes. A radio station reported from the governmental building, where Gamsakhurdia is staying, that total mobilisation was proclaimed to support the lawfully-elected authorities.

No shootings were reported in the city today. The "Santeli" (candle) rescue service started evacuating children and the elderly from the area of hostilities.

About 72 people have been killed and about 400 wounded since the beginning of unrest in Tbilisi, according to official data.

The metro is functioning normally, while communal, transport and shopping facilities cease working occasionally. Electric power supply is cut off in several districts of the city, shops close early in the evening and food supplies are scarce.

Compromise 'Impossible'

PM0301222392 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian
4 Jan 92 Morning Edition p 2

[Besik Urigashvili report, followed by TASS report: "Tbilisi: Fighting on Air and in City Center"]

[Excerpt] Power abhors a vacuum. The armed opposition became aware of this quite simple postulate on the 13th day of the civil war. On the evening of 2 January an appeal to the people from the opposition's Military Council was carried on Georgian television, which is controlled by the opposition. The appeal states that President Gamsakhurdia, who usurped power, has been overthrown, the constitution has been suspended, parliament has been dissolved, and Prime Minister Gugushvili has been removed from his post. Power, the appeal states, is passing to the Military Council, and Tengiz Sigua will provisionally be the acting prime minister. All state structures must obey the Military Council. The appeal emphasizes that political parties have been instructed to set up a consultative assembly with the participation of all political parties and organizations and representatives of national minorities and the intelligentsia.

The assembly has been instructed to draw up a program of Georgia's further political development and to ensure the speediest holding of democratic elections to parliament. The appeal also emphasizes that the Military Council will lay down all its powers as soon as the government has been formed. The appeal is signed on behalf of the council by Guard Commander Tengiz Kitovani and by Dzhaba Ioseliani, leader of the "Mkhedrioni" organization. The Military Council also includes Vazhi Adamiya, leader of the "Meraba Kostava" society, Tengiz Sigua, and a number of commanders of military formations.

With its first resolution the Military Council imposed a state of emergency in Tbilisi as of 0000 hours 3 January and a curfew from 2300 through 0600. The holding of all rallies and demonstrations has been banned temporarily. Georgiy Karkarashvili, commander of the "White Eagle" National Guard Battalion and a former Soviet Army officer, has been appointed commandant of the city.

In his speech he urged law-enforcement organs to obey the Military Council and the commandant and to embark on fulfilling their duties of restoring law and order and stopping arbitrariness and anarchy. He said

that henceforth the military authorities will detain all who carry weapons without special permission from the commandant.

Military Council Member Ioseliani declared in an interview with IZVESTIYA: Georgia will become a parliamentary republic, and the post of president is being abolished. He proposed the following formula for participation in the work of the consultative assembly: "All minus one." What Ioseliani meant by "all" was absolutely all the political parties operating lawfully on Georgian territory, including those now ruling. Minus one means Gamsakhurdia, whom Ioseliani called a dictator.

President Zviad Gamsakhurdia's reply was not long in coming. He addressed the people on Georgian radio and called the Military Council a junta trying to overthrow the legitimate government and the president. Gamsakhurdia urged people to commit acts of civil disobedience everywhere, not to fulfill the decrees of the self-styled council, and to create civil defense committees in enterprises. After this the president broadcast a decree ordering a mobilization throughout the territory of Georgia by 7 January. It obliged local prefectures to provide mobilization centers with transport and ordered the minister of communications, correspondingly, to provide communications. True, it is hard to imagine how all this will be fulfilled, and will this decree of Gamsakhurdia's serve as a signal for the official structures in the province and in Tbilisi to begin vigorous actions?

There was a relative lull on the territory of the hostilities on the evening of 2 January. The opposition-controlled Iveriya Hotel came under intensive tracer fire from the building of a former seminary on the city's northeast height for four hours from 1800 through 2200 hours. A Red Cross post is also in the hotel. Flames flared up twice in the hotel building, but still a conflagration was prevented. The opposition returned fire from the Academy of Arts building not far from the Iveriya Hotel. As the distance between the enemies' weapon positions is quite great, many tracer bullets hit apartment blocks. There were no more serious clashes during the past night.

So there is a dyarchy in Georgia. It is clear that neither side possesses sufficient forces to seriously gain control of the situation, and so the bloodshed is continuing. Hardly anyone seriously thinks today that all these terrible decrees—the president's on the one side and the Military Council's on the other—will be fulfilled. But after 2 January it has finally become clear that compromises are no longer possible. And so the war will be waged to the last. Someone will undoubtedly lose, but there will evidently be no winners. [passage omitted]

President on Peaceful Solution

LD0301131792 Moscow TASS in English
1228 GMT 3 Jan 92

[By correspondent Aleksey Golyaev]

[Text] Rome January 3 TASS—"I have tried several times to put an end to killing, but it is impossible to hold talks with the opposition, because they are a gang of criminals," Georgian President Zviad Gamsakhurdia said in an interview with the Italian newspaper *CORRIERE DE LA SERA* and the Spanish newspaper *EL MUNDO*. The only thing left is "struggle, struggle and once again struggle, in order to eliminate one hotbed of tension after another. Of course, it is not an easy thing to do," he pointed out.

Gamsakhurdia believes "a peaceful solution to the crisis could be possible, if Georgian society was mobilised, but for the moment it remains passive." In his opinion, it is impossible to resume talks with the opposition, because it demands the resignation of the president as a precondition, which is out of the question.

The president recalled that 87 per cent of the electorate had voted for him at the elections. He is sure most of the electors still support him.

According to Gamsakhurdia, Soviet Army units deployed in Georgia "did not help the legally elected president. On the contrary, they rendered substantial military assistance to bandits from the opposition."

He does not rule out a possible connection between the fact that Georgia did not take part in the Alma-Ata meeting on December 21 and the beginning of hostilities in Tbilisi on the next day. In his opinion, Boris Yeltsin is behind all these developments.

"I am sure we can suppress the rebellion by military means, but it will take much time. We wish to avoid a bloodbath," he said. Gamsakhurdia maintains he can hold out in his residence indefinitely. He rejected the accusation that many opposition members are kept there under arrest. "It is a lie. There are only volunteers here," he stressed.

Supporters 'Biding Their Time'

OW0301152092 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1409 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Georgian Government's permanent representative in Moscow, Mr. Pyotr Chkheidze, told IF [INTERFAX] that there had been no shooting in Tbilisi since morning, January 3. The conflicting parties—President Zviad Gamsakhurdia's supporters who are hiding in the government building, and the armed opposition groupings—are biding their time. Mr. Chkheidze believes that they are waiting for Zviad Gamsakhurdia's response to the ultimatum demanding that he resign.

Mr. Chkheidze said that Georgia's ex-premier, Mr. Tengiz Sigua, whom the Provisional Military Council charged with the duties of the head of government on Thursday, is currently shaping the government.

The Military Council has removed Georgia's Prime Minister, Mr. Vissarion Gugushvili, from his post. Meanwhile, by decree of the Military Council, a state of emergency and curfew lasting from 23:00 till 6:00 were introduced in Tbilisi on January 3.

On the night of January 2, Zviad Gamsakhurdia spoke on Georgian radio. He urged the population to hold a general strike and start a campaign of civil disobedience. Mr. Gamsakhurdia also announced general mobilization of his supporters aged from 20 to 45. A rally of Gamsakhurdia's supporters has already been announced in a Tbilisi district.

On Georgian TV, controlled by the opposition, scientists and cultural figures are urging Mr. Gamsakhurdia to resign.

Presidium Demands Asatiani Appear

LD0301161892 Moscow TASS International Service
in Russian 1527 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Text] Moscow, 3 Jan (TASS)—The Presidium of the Georgian Supreme Soviet adopted a resolution on Thursday, 2 January, demanding that Akakiy Asatiani, leader of the parliament, come to the besieged building of the Supreme Soviet before 1100 on 4 January. Otherwise the Presidium reserves the right to put forth at the sitting of the parliament the question of suspending Asatiani's plenary powers and to bring a no-confidence vote against him as the chairman of the Supreme Soviet.

The document, which TASS received through the channels of Russian Amateur Radio Emergency Services, states that as of 22 December 1991 "the majority of the members of Georgian Supreme Soviet, alongside units of the National Guard that have remained loyal to the people, and volunteers, are defending the Government House," and that the Cabinet of Ministers carries on its work.

"Akakiy Asatiani, chairman of Georgian Supreme Soviet, notes that the document was not in the building on the day when military actions broke out. Since then he has not made his position clear. His statement was read on television, which is controlled by the criminals, on 28 December. The statement does not reflect the stance of the Georgian Supreme Soviet and thus is only playing into the hands of the traitors of the homeland."

President Appeals to People

LD0301161192 Moscow TASS in English 1600 GMT
3 Jan 92

[Text] Moscow January 3 TASS—TASS today has received through channels of the Russian Radio Amateurs' Emergency Service the text of the Georgian president's and Supreme Soviet's appeal to the population of Georgia, received from the press service of the president of Georgia. The document says:

"At the time when we have almost achieved the republic's genuine independence and its recognition by leading countries of the world, some traitors of our homeland are trying to trample under foot the independence of our republic by setting up a military council, in the same way as it was done in February 1921, when a revolutionary committee was formed. Today, the fate of our homeland is being decided. I urge everybody to rise up in defence of the homeland, in defence of our children's future. All the population of our republic must come to the defence of the lawfully and democratically elected government and president of the republic. The government is in full control of the situation in the republic and directs all its power structures. We have surmounted many difficulties and obstacles on the road to independence. We believe that now, too, the Georgian people will cope with the current situation with honour. I call upon you to set up strike committees and resist decisions issued by the military council. I urge you to hold large meetings, strikes and other acts of insubordination.

"The television, now held by the opposition, has announced that a delegation, headed by first vice-chairman of the Armenian Council of Ministers had arrived in Tbilisi on behalf of Armenian President Ter-Petrosyan to arrange talks between the government and the opposition. This is false information, because the delegation has arrived here to meet the president of the republic, but it was stopped and brought to the military council. The delegation members demanded a meeting with the president and they will soon be here, at the Government House."

President Agrees to Referendum

LD0301174592 Moscow Teleradiokompanii Ostankino
First Program Network in Russian 1600 GMT 3 Jan 92

[From the "Novosti" Newscast]

[Text] We have just received a telephone report recorded by a MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI correspondent in Tbilisi. Here is this recording. We must broadcast it.

[Unidentified speaker: text of telephone report carried in subtitles] Despite the fact that the forces are leaving Gamsakhurdia—they are simply running away from him—he still has considerable forces to maintain the defense. According to our data, 500 armed men remain subordinated to him. He is now surrounded, except for one side. And this side is staying open to enable people to flee. Despite the fact that Gamsakhurdia is not making concessions, he said on 3 January that he agrees to his power being limited, considerably limited; he agrees to the holding of a referendum on whether presidential power should exist in Georgia. But naturally, the opposition is not accepting these proposals any more because they do not trust him.

Storming of Building Considered

OW0301190292 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1802 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] IF [INTERFAX] has learned from opposition sources that a new storm of the Georgian Supreme Council building (House of Government) in Rustaveli avenue in Tbilisi is now being contemplated. According to forces opposing president Zviad Gamsakhurdia, who has been held up there, there are only 500 people left to defend the building. The majority of them are women from the so-called "black panty-hose battalion" and youngsters from a Svan group called "Lemi". Opposition claims there are several dozens children held by the defenders in the House of Government as a live shield.

Zviad Gamsakhurdia, speaking on the radio which airs its programs from the House of Government, said that once the "Kremlin putsch" is quelled, he would take steps to bring Georgia into the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States], to release political prisoners, to reinstate South-Ossetia's autonomy and to enable Turks-Meskhetines to return home, opposition sources said from Tbilisi.

According to opposition forces, the majority of Tbilisi's Afghan war veterans have sided with the opposition after rumours spread in Tbilisi about the shooting by the fire-squad in the underground shelter of the chairman of the Georgian Afghan War Veteran Union, deputy defense minister of the republic Nodar Giorgadze.

Reports about Mr Giorgadze's and Georgian MP Jemal Koletiani's shooting were denied at Thursday's press-conference in Tbilisi.

Meanwhile, Georgian foreign minister Mr. Murman Omanidze arrived in Moscow on January 3. Opposition forces are of the opinion he was sent to Moscow to win Russia's and personally Boris Yeltsin's support for Zviad Gamsakhurdia.

On Friday, at 18:00, central television will air a statement by the Military Council of Georgia that power has been taken over by a coalition government headed by Tenghiz Sigua and that presidency in Georgia has been abolished.

Ultimatum Extended to 4 Jan

OW0301200892 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1944 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The ultimatum the Georgian opposition had offered to the republican president Zviad Gamsakhurdia, demanding his resignation, was extended from

18:00 January 3, to 8:00, January 4, said Irakli Kadagishvili, a member of the chief committee of the opposition National-Democratic Party. In case Mr. Gamsakhurdia refuses to step down, the building of the Georgian Supreme Soviet in which the president and his supporters are lodged, will be stormed, said Mr. Kadagishvili.

The opposition has enough forces to take the presidential residence, claims the Georgian Military Council led by Tenghiz Kitovani, leader of the rebellious Georgian national guards, and Jaba Ioseliani, leader of the paramilitary organisation named Mkhedrioni (Horsemen).

Tbilisi is calm now, said Mr. Kadagishvili. On Thursday the Supreme Soviet suspended the Georgian constitution and dissolved the constitutional bodies, including the Supreme Soviet and the republican government. In addition, the Military Council introduced a state of emergency and a 23:00 to 6:00 curfew and dismissed Premier Vissarion Gugushvili.

Tenghiz Sigua, who was appointed acting premier by the Military Council, began to form an interim government. According to Mr. Kadagishvili, the Defense Minister will be Major General Levan Sharashelidze, Interior Minister David Salaridze, Foreign Minister Irakli Megreladze and Tbilisi Commandant, Georgi Karkarashvili.

Mr. Karkarashvili also said that the Military Council had suggested that the political parties and national minorities form a consultative political council.

An Armenian parliamentary delegation is currently on a visit to Tbilisi, said Mr. Karkarashvili. For example, it was the Armenian delegation that delivered to Mr. Gamsakhurdia the ultimatum demanding his resignation.

Military Council Recognized

LD0401134892 Moscow Radio Moscow World Service in English 1300 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Text] Georgia's Ministry of Internal Affairs and the republican procurator's office have said they will be subordinate to the military council formed by the opposition. But some areas of Georgia, including Rustavi, have announced they support the president.

This morning the opposition armed units should have started assault of the government buildings if the president had stayed. So far there are no reports from Tbilisi because communication lines with the city are out of operation. Earlier the commander in chief of the National Guard, Tengiz Kitovani, said that the opposition wanted to save the lives of the young men whom the president forced to stay in the government building, using them as a cover.

Public and transport services and shops do not work in Tbilisi. The airport is likely to be mined.

Opposition Threatens To Use Fire

LD0401144292 Moscow Teleradiokompanii Ostankino Television First Program Network in Russian 1300 GMT 4 Jan 92

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] Observers predict that the main news today is to be expected from Tbilisi. Various sources report that the opposition forces intend to storm the Government House today. They are threatening to pump petrol into the building and set fire to it if President Gamsakhurdia does not surrender. War is war, but such barbaric methods evoke horror in the 20th century. How low can people stoop?

Deadline Reached

OW0401151892 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1441 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The deadline of the Georgian opposition's ultimatum to President Zviad Gamsakhurdia pressing for his resignation was 8:00 today. Soon after that a spokesman for the opposition National Democratic party told IF's [INTERFAX's] correspondent that the storming of the government building in Tbilisi where Gamsakhurdia had taken shelter might begin any minute.

The president continues to resist. He ordered prefects in the outlying areas of Georgia to form armed units and send them to Tbilisi to defend his presidency. However there are reports that not all is in order in his bunker, that on Friday an exchange of fire occurred there, and a group of people left the building. The same day unidentified persons opened fire on a meeting of Gamsakhurdia's supporters as a result of which several people were killed or wounded.

Security in the city is tight. Newcomers are allowed to stay there for no more than one day. The police have the right to enter dwellings with a view to discovering those who violate the new security rules. Transport in the city continues to function badly. Local telephone and long-distance communications are switched off.

In the meantime, the military council formed by the opposition urged the Georgians and Ossetians fighting in Tskhinvali to stop the bloodshed and begin negotiations. It offered its mediation.

Rally Results in 4 Dead

AU0401152492 Paris AFP in English 1122 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Text] Tbilisi, Jan 4 (AFP) — Four people were killed and 34 injured in a rally in support of beleaguered Georgian President Zviad Gamsakhurdia on the outskirts of Tbilisi, according to a new toll issued by the Georgian Health Ministry on Saturday [4 January].

At the headquarters of Dzhaba Ioseliani, one of the opposition leaders, it was acknowledged that men had been sent to break up Friday's demonstration.

Aides to Ioseliani, a member of the military council which announced it was taking power on Thursday, said the protest was illegal under the current state of emergency declared by the council. But they said that the men did not have orders to shoot and had only used their weapons after OMON [Special Purpose Militia Detachments] riot police, hidden in the crowd, had opened fire.

Their version contradicted witness accounts, which spoke of armed men arriving by car and shooting into a crowd of 1,000 Gamsakhurdia supporters after failing to disperse them by firing warning shots into the air.

A woman and a young man were killed on the spot and two people died of their injuries in hospital, Deputy Health Minister Merab Kvitiashvili said. One of three men lynched by the mob after the shooting was left for dead. Gravely injured he was taken to the parliament building, where Gamsakhurdia is holed up. His condition was critical, Kvitiashvili said.

Fighting in Georgia has left at least 80 dead and 400 injured since December 24, according to the Health Ministry, which is responsible for the emergency services and hospitals in Tbilisi.

After a brief lull on Friday afternoon, fighting continued sporadically on Saturday in the centre of the Georgian capital.

Gamsakhurdia has refused to bow to pressure to resign. The opposition on Thursday formed a military council and provisional government, which immediately instituted a night-time curfew and a state of emergency.

Omanidze: President 'Doomed'

OW0401152992 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1441 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] "I'm involved in no secret mission. I came to Moscow on my own to tell the citizens of this country and the world community what brought Georgia to the brink of ruin", said Georgia's foreign minister and first deputy prime minister Murman Omanidze on Saturday [4 January] in an exclusive interview with IF's [INTERFAX's] correspondent.

He arrived in Moscow on Friday [3 January] from Armenia where he had come on a peace mission in the framework of endeavours to settle the conflict in Tbilisi. M. Omanidze conceded that from the 28th to the 30th of December he was actually under arrest in Zviad Gamsakhurdia's bunker where he was subjected to insults and psychological pressure. The deputy defence minister and the chairman of the republic's union of Afghan war veterans were kept in the bunker of the government building together with him. On December 30 the first

deputy prime minister managed to get out "with the help of friends and by means of a subterfuge", as he put it. Subsequently he went to Grozny and then to Yerevan, from where he arrived in Moscow. He did not want to return to Tbilisi where he expected reprisals.

He can justify neither the opposition nor President Gamsakhurdia, M. Omanidze stressed. Nevertheless he noted that Georgia's parliamentary opposition turned into armed opposition because of the "misguided and imprudent policy" pursued by Gamsakhurdia. According to the first deputy prime minister, at the moment reconciliation is impossible, and Gamsakhurdia is doomed.

Omanidze believes that Georgia's President ought to have resigned on December 19, when the opposition confronted him with its ultimatum. According to him, the bloodshed could have been averted if "a sense of proportion and responsibility" had prevailed over Gamsakhurdia. Now the president has lost the vast capital of popular confidence which he enjoyed during his election campaign. According to Omanidze, Russia's leadership and business circles should help Georgia rebuild its devastated economy.

Opposition Demands Called 'Fair'

LD0401225892 Moscow Russian Television Network
in Russian 2100 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Interview with Georgian Foreign Minister Murman Omanidze by unidentified reporter in Moscow "today"]

[Text] [Announcer] Georgian Foreign Minister Murman Omanidze, who is in Moscow, stated today that he was lured into the bunker of the besieged Government House by deception and force and got out only thanks to servicemen who fought in Afghanistan.

[Begin recording] [Correspondent] Does the opposition have any power?

[Omanidze] Certainly. If the opposition did not have any power, they would not have made these fierce attacks.

[Correspondent] What will the situation in Georgia be if the opposition gains the upper hand?

[Omanidze] I would like to reiterate that this is unpredictable. [end recording]

[Correspondent] Omanidze relies, however, on the common sense of the opposition forces led by former Prime Minister Sigua:

[Begin Omanidze recording] The opposition has a leader like Sigua who is experienced, and it is not likely that he will ever make a mistake again. [end recording]

[Correspondent] In response to a question about where he sees a way out of the situation, the minister replied:

[Begin Omanidze recording] I think that the demands of some representatives of the intelligentsia as well as of the

opposition are fair to a certain degree. In order to prevent bloodshed it is necessary to compromise. [end recording]

President Called on To Resign

*LD0501140692 Moscow TASS International Service
in Russian 1315 GMT 5 Jan 92*

[By Igor Gvritshvili]

[Text] Moscow, 5 Jan (TASS)—"Tengiz Sigua, the former prime minister of the Government of Georgia, is the only person whose personal and businesslike qualities make him capable of heading the leadership of that republic." This was the opinion given today in an interview with a TASS correspondent by Georgian Foreign Minister Murman Omanidze, who is currently in Moscow.

He stressed that the only condition for an end to the bloodshed in Tbilisi "is the immediate resignation of President Zviad Gamsakhurdia." In the minister's opinion, the days "of this man and his corrupt circle are numbered." This opinion also was expressed today in a conversation with a TASS correspondent in Moscow by another member of the Georgian Government, who wished to remain anonymous. He added that the only correct decision that Zviad Gamsakhurdia can make at the present moment is "publicly to state his irreversible departure from the political scene." "Only in this way can the people retain any kind of good memory of him," the man said.

Analyzing the history of the development of the armed conflict in Tbilisi, Murman Omanidze noted that "the widespread version of the conflict between the opposition and the supporters of the Georgian president is incorrect." In actual fact, "the quarrel is between the members of the ruling 'Round Table-Free Georgia' coalition in the republic." He recalled that Tengiz Sigua and Tengiz Kitovani, the head of the Republican Guard, were at one time proteges of Zviad Gamsakhurdia, while the real opposition parties, and there are over a dozen of them, are not taking part in the conflict and are adopting a wait-and-see attitude.

Foreign Minister on Flight

*LD0501185892 Moscow Teleradiokompanii Ostankino
Television First Program Network in Russian
1935 GMT 4 Jan 92*

[Interview with Georgian Foreign Minister Murman Omanidze by correspondent Igor Minayev in Moscow; date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Minayev] What specifically led to your decision to leave Tbilisi for Moscow? Were there any personal conflicts with the Georgian president?

[Omanidze] Well, one day, first the prime minister and then the president telephoned me and said there would be a meeting, an expanded meeting, of the Supreme

Soviet Presidium and the Council of Ministers. This angered and surprised me. At such a tragic moment, when blood was being shed, when chaos reigned in the republic, the Council of Ministers was going to meet in the bunker! I decided to go, even though I knew I was doomed, even though I knew they could settle accounts with me, so to speak.

When I arrived at the bunker, the minister of education and the minister of science and technology were also there. They had allegedly assembled for, as they called it, an emergency session of the Council of Ministers and the Presidium, but I perceived that this was no meeting, it was simply a mob of people. And a settling of accounts there was.

After a while, by deception—the president summoned me to where he was—I was shoved into the water tower, or whatever it is called, where the water pumping installations are. That was where I met my colleague in the Afghan Union, Nodar Georgadze, who had already been arrested. Some time later, they took the handcuffs off Nodar Georgadze and took him away. This had a psychological effect on me, it was a real psychological attack. Then in came that half-educated ignoramus, the minister of trade—he only has a secondary-school education, and in that post, too—and he says to me: Well, now you just sit there for a bit. I said: We will meet again, you will see. Well, okay then, he answered, until you meet me again, we will talk with you here.

I said: Take me out of here! Either have done with me or stop taunting me. Some time after they took the handcuffs off Nodar Georgadze and took him away, a number of shots rang out. I leapt to my feet at that and shouted: Take me out, too. Why are you taunting me? And at this scuffle, so to speak, this sudden movement, they recoiled their automatic rifles, and I went straight back to the wall and sat back down on the chair again. Get out of here, I said, but when they recoiled of course I backed off. At 0300 they took me out and I slept in the car.

Three hours later the president summoned me, and I had a talk with him—a pretty unpleasant talk. I said: What is this all about? Who gave permission to taunt me? But I noticed that he was detached from everything. You understand, there had been so much nervous stress, so much had fallen on his shoulders.

Some way or another—one might say because of my flexibility and thanks to the will of my friends who were there, and there were other people who came, my comrades in arms—I managed to get out of there.

[Minayev] Gamsakhurdia is known to have many opponents, but he still has quite a lot of support in the republic. How would you describe the situation in Georgia: a putsch, a revolution, a fight for [words indistinct]?

[Omanidze] As I have told you, I justify neither side. This could have been decided peacefully. But that man and his friends have a great deal of skill in turning their friends into enemies.

I used to work from 0800 to 0300 or 0400—through the night. But some corrupt deputies and leaders who have bankrupted themselves politically, economically, and morally—in all areas of life—had enough after seven hours.

[Minayev] You have been very critical of many associates of President Gamsakhurdia. But this criticism probably casts a shadow on the president himself. How is it that Gamsakhurdia, who won 87 percent of the vote, has brought bloodshed to the country, has brought the government into confrontation with its own people? How did this happen?

[Omanidze] No doubt the president himself is primarily to blame. He caused this bloodshed by ignoring the Constitution, by ignoring all legal norms and the views of the parliament—the parliamentary opposition—by proclaiming himself to be the law. When he came to power he remained a dissident at heart, without recognizing any realities, without introducing any real structures. He thought the state could be governed without any structures. We worked for a year without any structure. We did not know who was supposed to do what. Everything was chaotic. Once he came to power, once he had won and became the leader of the people, the nation, and the republic, our policy of dissidence should have been replaced by a policy of leadership, especially after he received the endorsement of 87 percent of the people in the election. But, I repeat, he never reconciled himself to the presidential mantle that he had assumed. He remained a dissident regardless of everything. This ruined everything.

[Minayev] Let us assume the opposition—as it still is—comes to power. What guarantee is there that the Gamsakhurdia experience will not be repeated?

[Omanidze] If the Constitution is not observed, if the law is not observed, if this tension and deliberate confrontation continue, then another explosion is inevitable. I think that if Tengiz Sigua comes to power and stands his ground this will be a lesson to him. He is not a man of the street, as he has been dubbed by some people. I have often heard him being described, abused, in this way. On many occasions I pointed out that there was no need to abuse the man. If he is guilty of something, then this should be explained. It is pointless blaming him for everything; pointless to sling mud at a man who was honest, intelligent, and upright. If he had personal ambitions, that was his personal affair. Personal relations are also his personal affair. But state relations should, I think, be handled differently. I think this will be a lesson to him. After all, he is a professor, a doctor of science, director of an institute, a representative of the Georgian intelligentsia. I do not think he will repeat the mistakes that he made before.

[Minayev] Let us turn to the consequences of this policy. Is it true that 80 percent of the houses in central Tbilisi have been destroyed, and people like ourselves who have never been to Tbilisi will never see it in its previous form?

[Omanidze] Yes, unfortunately that is true. Almost the entire center, almost all of Rustaveli Prospekt, has been destroyed. There was not a single building, as far as the opera house, which was not burned—either the roof or the whole building. It goes without saying that I blame both sides for this. The city should have been spared. The lives of citizens should have been spared. Everything possible should have been done to preserve peace and tranquility in the republic. But I wish to say yet again that both the opposition and the authorities are to blame for this. The leadership should have done its utmost to avoid giving the opposition an opportunity to turn the city into a cemetery.

[Minayev] No doubt we can also regard this statement as self-criticism.

[Omanidze] Yes, of course. I was one of the leaders. But I said what I said for all to hear. Many representatives of the opposition can confirm what I was saying, shouting at the top of my voice, what I was trying to do. But what can you do when your superiors, your leaders, people in higher office settled this problem? I do not think my voice was heard.

[Minayev] What do you think of the policies that caused destruction and, above all, bloodshed and loss of life? Is it right to say that, having received this tragic and sad lesson, Georgians now realize what dictatorship means and that this will never happen again in Georgia?

[Omanidze] I do not think the Georgian people will ever forget this lesson. I thought that with the victory of the Round Table, there would be a dictatorship of honesty. On the contrary, we got a dictatorship of ruin, revenge, and violence whose fruits we are now reaping. This is what they tried to foist on the people.

[Minayev] Even the most sophisticated minds find it difficult to completely answer what is happening in Georgia, who is right and who is wrong. Time will tell. It is a worrying fact that many of those who swore loyalty to President Gamsakhurdia, who were his supporters, now switch easily to saying that his policies are inhuman, now set themselves up as arbiters of his fate. The perjorative term Zviadovites is even being used by them. But can the people really be blamed for believing in a leader who failed to live up to their hopes?

Amateurs are playing politics everywhere, and death and bloodshed are omnipresent. It is criminal to exploit the people's belief in a better, independent future. The real tragedy is that the people are often blind in the way they use their right to choose leaders and their future. They do not sense the emptiness and deceit that lie behind high-sounding but sly promises. Thou shalt not make

unto thee any graven image, the Bible says. The events in Tbilisi are a lesson to us all.

Council Abolishes Prefectures

LD0401171192 Moscow TASS International Service
in Russian 1553 GMT 4 Jan 92

[By Albert Kochetkov]

[Text] Tbilisi, 4 Jan (TASS)—The Military Council of the Georgian opposition today abolished the prefectures in the republic's cities and regions. Supreme authority will be exercised at local level by representatives appointed and empowered by the opposition. The Military Council is taking measures to stabilize the situation in Tbilisi and restore normality to all spheres of life in the republic. All the Georgian mass media are expected to resume work within the next few days.

President Zviad Gamsakhurdia's supporters, who are holding out in the government building, still have no intention of laying down their arms. According to reports from there, the president has called upon the people of the republic to form self-defense detachments and actively resist the armed detachments of the opposition. In the opinion of several observers, this is a call to begin guerrilla war.

Government troops made another abortive attempt today to damage technical facilities and the tower at the republican radio and television center on Tatsminda mountain. Opposition forces remain in control of this information outlet, which is being used to broadcast announcements from the Military Council.

Attack Postponed

OW0401182992 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1740 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] In Georgia, the Military Council, which claims to have deposed President Zviad Gamsakhurdia, has extended the deadline of its ultimatum to the president, who together with his supporters is taking refuge in the government building in the centre of the capital Tbilisi. The previous deadline expired Saturday [4 January] morning. According to opposition sources the attack on the government offices has been put off until Sunday, so as to let as many people as possible leave the besieged building.

The Military Council has abolished the institution of prefects, who were personal representatives of President Gamsakhurdia locally. The Council has appointed Vakhtang Razmadze Georgia's prosecutor general and Roman Gventsadze its interior minister.

In the meantime local television and radio have gone on the air again. Intellectuals have been urging President Gamsakhurdia to step down. The chairman of the

Supreme Soviet of Georgia Akakiy Asatiani has said in a televised interview that Gamsakhurdia's resignation would restore stability.

The military council has issued a statement describing the events in Tbilisi as an uprising against dictatorship. The statement says that overthrowing the current regime is the sole way of saving the nation.

A consultative political centre of all parties and organizations is reported to have been founded. The centre says it is open to everybody except Gamsakhurdia. The co-ordinating council has begun to work on a program for building Georgia's statehood on the basis of democracy and is directly involved in efforts to form a provisional government. Besides, it has already begun preparations for new parliamentary elections.

Leaders Deny Coup

LD0401202192 Moscow TASS International Service
in Russian 1942 GMT 4 Jan 92

[By Albert Kochetkov]

[Text] Tbilisi, 4 Jan (TASS)—At a news conference this evening the leaders of the Military Council formed in Georgia by the republic's opposition forces dismissed the description of the present events in Tbilisi as a coup against President Zviad Gamsakhurdia. At the meeting with journalists Tengiz Kitovani, one of the leaders of the Military Council said, "We were not conducting an active struggle against him until it became clear to world public opinion that Gamsakhurdia had instituted an authoritarian regime of personal dictatorship in Georgia. So, what this now can and should be described as is not a military coup, but the toppling of a dictatorship in the name of establishing democratic order."

Answering a question about the Military Council's attitude toward the presence on the republic's territory of units of the armed forces of the Commonwealth of Independent States, Tengiz Kitovani said that their status should be regulated on, for instance, a treaty basis. The military are not a hindrance to us, he remarked. They are defending Georgia's borders.

A sensational statement was made at the news conference by Professor Jaba Ioseliani, leader of the Mkhedrioni (Horsemen—TASS) organization, and one of the leaders of the Military Council. He named three ministers of the Gamsakhurdia government—Foreign Minister Murman Omanidze, Internal Minister Dilar Khabuliani, and Igor Chkheidze, minister of material and technical resources—as long-term agents of the KGB, and disclosed the aliases they used for their clandestine activities. He told journalists that he was in possession of detailed information concerning their activities as KGB agents.

At the end of the news conference, the leaders of the Military Council said the decisive assault on Government House, in which the president and his supporters

have now stayed for two weeks, depends on how the situation develops. I have spent 11 months in prison under the Gamsakhurdia regime. Jaba Ioseliani joked; now let him decide on his prison sentence himself. At any rate, an assault remains a possibility for the opposition, if the president's supporters attempt to expand the zone of military actions beyond the boundaries of Tbilisi city center.

Tbilisi Commandant on Events

*LD0501003992 Moscow Radio Rossii Network
in Russian 2000 GMT 4 Jan 92*

[Report from Tbilisi by Zurab Dvali]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] Journalists from the YPRINDA independent news agency today met the Tbilisi commandant (Giorgiy Karkarashvili). Several questions were asked about the situation in the city and in the republic as a whole. The commandant assured that the situation is under the control of the military council. But armed formations loyal to the president are organizing random shootings in various parts of Tbilisi as a provocation in an attempt to create panic and destabilize the situation.

(Karkarashvili) said that some 250 or 300 armed fighters are in Government House defending the president and the government. Most of the ministers and officials of the former government are also there. Asked when the opposition's armed formations are preparing to storm Government House, (Karkarashvili) replied that, in principle, his fighters have enough sufficiently powerful weaponry to be able to accomplish such an operation in 15 minutes. He retains the hope, albeit flimsy, that Zviad Gamsakhurdia will think better of his situation and surrender in order to avoid further bloodshed.

During the conversation we also received confirmation of the report that Zviad Gamsakhurdia's family is at their own home in Tbilisi, being guarded by people loyal to the president.

At 1830 today a news conference was held at the Georgian Academy of Sciences, now the headquarters of the military council, by military council members Professor Dzhaba Ioseliani, chairman of the Mkhedrioni patriotic organization, and Tengiz Kitovani, commander of the guard. They stated that 90 percent of capital residents are on the side of the opposition, while only 10 percent of Tbilisi residents support the president and government. Most of the regions of Georgia are subordinating themselves to the military council. The situation is complicated only in some parts of the western areas of Georgia.

Tengiz Kitovani said that he has a video recording showing how young schoolchildren were rounded up and taken to Government House as hostages. It is this, and the fact that there are many innocent recruits in the building, which is keeping them from taking resolute steps.

On the subject of relations with the Soviet Army, it is said that the military council has no particular contacts with them. To a question about the future fate of Zviad Gamsakhurdia, Dzhaba Ioseliani replied that he will be put on trial.

It emerged at the news conference that Supreme Soviet Chairman Akakiy Asatiani is taking no part in the current events. On the subject of representatives of the Checheno Republic taking part in the events in Tbilisi, Dzhaba Ioseliani said that Dzhokhar Dudayev's stance is unacceptable and mistaken, but the hope remains that the misunderstandings can be ironed out.

Trial Possible for President

*LD0501104292 Moscow Mayak Radio Network
in Russian 0830 GMT 5 Jan 92*

[Text] [Announcer] I believe that Zurab Dvali in Tbilisi has made yet another attempt to get through on the telephone. Zurab, you're on the air.

[Dvali] Yes, good morning.

[Announcer] Hello. Hello. It's good that we can hear you. We're listening to what you have to say.

[Dvali] I think the situation in Tbilisi is gradually stabilizing. At all events, there hasn't been any serious shooting for over 24 hours. Yesterday evening, 4 January, a news conference was held at the building of the Georgian Academy of Sciences, where the headquarters of the Military Council is now located.

[Announcer] It is hard to hear you. Can you speak up?

[Dvali] Yesterday evening a news conference was held at the building of the Georgian Academy of Sciences, where the headquarters of the Military Council is now located. It was given by Professor Dzhaba Ioseliani, chairman of the Mkhedrioni patriotic organization; and Tengiz Kitovani, [words indistinct] Guard, who are members of the Military Council. It was stated that 90 percent of the capital's inhabitants are on the side of the opposition. Only 10 percent of the people of Tbilisi support Zviad Gamsakhurdia. Most regions of Georgia are obeying the Military Council. There is a complex situation in a number of districts of Western Georgia.

Tengiz Kitovani said he has a video recording showing that young schoolchildren have been locked up inside Government House as hostages. This circumstance and the presence of many completely innocent raw recruits inside the building are holding the opposition back from a decisive assault. Asked about the future of Zviad Gamsakhurdia, Dzhaba Ioseliani replied that he will be put on trial since he has rejected offers of safe passage out of Georgia if he surrenders. Instead he has continued the bloodshed.

Tengiz Kitovani said that Tengiz Epitashvili, the president's representative in Samachablo, the so-called South Ossetia, has assured him of his complete loyalty to the

Military Council. In doing so he ended rumors that assistance is being rushed to the president and government from that region.

Asked about the release of Torez Kulumbegov, who has been arrested in connection with the events in Samachablo, Dzhaba Ioseliani replied that they are prepared to release him and are awaiting Ossetian representatives from that region.

Asked about the participation of Chechen representatives in the Tbilisi events, Dzhaba Ioseliani said that the position of Dzokhar Dudayev is unacceptable and mistaken. There is hope, however, that this misunderstanding will be sorted out, he said.

Those were the highlights of yesterday's news conference. This is Zurab Dvali and the YPRINDA agency with a special report for Mayak.

5 Jan 'Relatively' Peaceful

LD0501111592 Moscow TASS International Service
in Russian 1015 GMT 5 Jan 92

[By Albert Kochetkov]

[Text] Tbilisi, 5 Jan (TASS)—The night passed relatively peacefully in Tbilisi. From time to time supporters of Georgian President Zviad Gamsakhurdia opened fire at the republican television mast which is controlled by opposition forces.

With the onset of darkness, crossroads in Tbilisi are blocked off by representatives of the Military Council and the city militia, who check the documents of the few passers-by and inspect motor vehicles. Public transportation, with the exception of the metro, is working irregularly.

The Georgian Ministry of Health and Social Security has issued figures for the losses sustained by both sides during two weeks of fighting in the republican capital. As of this morning there were 84 dead and 348 injured. These figures are not complete, since some casualties have not been registered at medical establishments.

Situation 'Tense'

OW0501142692 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1330 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Since the morning of December [as received] 5 Tbilisi, fully controlled by the opposition, is tense, but no shooting is heard, reports IF's [INTERFAX] correspondent.

The Military Council heading the Georgian opposition would not storm the republican Supreme Soviet (government building) to avoid loss of life. The government building, in which the Georgian President Zviad Gamsakhurdia is lodged with 300 to 500 of his supporters, is encircled by armed opposition units, save for a passage

for those who would choose to leave the building. The city is under the state of emergency and a curfew introduced by the Military Council.

Saturday evening another rally of Gamsakhurdia's supporters was dispersed by unidentified gunmen who were shooting to miss. A similar action two days ago led to casualties when, says Deputy Health Minister Roland Meburishvili, 38 people were injured during the dispersal of the rally. Two of them died on the spot and one died next day. Jaba Ioseliani, one of the Military council leaders, described the clash at a December [as received] 4 press-conference in Tbilisi as "a well-coordinated action by the aides of the former president."

Opposition leaders said at that press conference that the population of eastern and many regions in western Georgia supported the opposition forces. They also stated that presidential rule must be scrapped in Georgia and that Gamsakhurdia will be brought to trial. Security was guaranteed to the President's family.

On the morning of December [as received] 5, Torez Kulumbegov, a south Osset leader, was released. He had been arrested last January on charges of fuelling ethnic strife and nationalism. According to Ioseliani, there are no obstacles to settling the conflict in Shida Kartli (the Georgian name for south Ossetia). Representatives of the south Ossetia combatants have been invited to negotiate in Tbilisi.

IF reports that Tbilisi is hit by a food crisis. The shop shelves are empty, and peasants are not hurrying to bring foodstuffs to the market. To make matters worse, there has been a sharp rise in crime in the city, but today police resumed patrolling.

It is officially reported that 79 people were killed and 392 were injured in the course of the fights that started in Tbilisi on December 22. The Military Council sets the number of dead at nearly 200 and that of the wounded at around 900.

Armenia Offers Asylum

AU0501142992 Paris AFP in English 1319 GMT
5 Jan 92

[Text] Tbilisi, Jan 5 (AFP)—Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosyan has offered asylum to his beleaguered Georgian counterpart Zviad Gamsakhurdia, leaders of the armed opposition said Sunday [5 January]. Ter-Petrosyan made the offer in a telegram he sent Sunday to Gamsakhurdia, according to a military council set up by the opposition to replace the Georgian president.

Gamsakhurdia, holed up with loyalist troops in the parliament building, has refused to resign despite being besieged by opposition forces for the past two weeks.

The military council also said it had released the parliamentary speaker of South Ossetia, Thorez Kulumbegov

[name as received], imprisoned a year ago by Georgian authorities on charges of inciting clashes in the ethnically troubled region.

Meanwhile, long distance telephone lines, down since the conflict began in late December, were reestablished Saturday as the result of a decision by the council, it said.

Troops Said Ready To Leave

PM0501152792 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA
PRAVDA in Russian 4 Jan 92 p 1

[IMA-PRESS report: "Military Pulling Out of Tbilisi"]

[Text] A Soviet Army officer who has returned from Tbilisi and wishes to remain anonymous has told an IMA-PRESS correspondent in St. Petersburg that the bloodshed around Government House had spurred the adoption of a plan for the immediate evacuation of Soviet Army units from Georgia. The families of the military personnel will leave with them.

Military transport planes will be used for the evacuation and each family will be able to take just two suitcases of personal belongings with it. Everything else will be left for the local inhabitants.

The officer reported that military installations are being mined prior to the pullout and that a special sapper subunit had already arrived from Moscow for this purpose. According to the officer, the detonators are equipped with 144-hour fuses.

Army Withdrawal Denied

PM0601101792 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian
6 Jan 92 p 6

[Georgiy Ovcharenko report under the rubric: "Excuse Me, Colleagues, But...": "Sensation Fails To Explode"]

[Text] The 4 January edition of KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA carried an IMA-PRESS report under the sensational headline "Military Pulling Out of Tbilisi." They are not even pulling out, but simply fleeing: "Each family will be able to take just two suitcases of personal belongings with it"; "everything else will be left for the local inhabitants."

It gets worse: "...Military installations are being mined prior to the pullout" and a special sapper subunit has already arrived from Moscow for this purpose, while "the detonators are equipped with 144-hour fuses."

That's fine, isn't it?

In alarm I used a high-frequency communications linkup to telephone Yuriy Grekov, first deputy commander of the Transcaucasus Military District, in Tbilisi and read him the KOMSOMOLKA commentary.

"Of all the nonsensical rumors to circulate?!" Yuriy Pavlovich said in astonishment after a silence. "Neither our leadership, nor the Transcaucasus Military District

officers and their families have any thoughts of evacuation, much less an immediate evacuation. And mining military installations when a war is under way in downtown Tbilisi—a war in which we military are not interfering—could only be seen as provocation. Tell your colleagues: Before publishing that kind of 'sensation,' it would be a good idea to check it out first."

We address that useful piece of advice to all new news agencies that are pushing "soap bubbles" into the mass media in the hunt for sensation.

Prefect's Office Seized in Rustavi

OW0501173092 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1712 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] IF's [INTERFAX's] correspondent reports the resumption on Sunday [5 January] afternoon of vigorous fire exchanges outside the Government Building where President Zviad Gamsakhurdia and his supporters are still hiding. According to the opposition, non-Georgian snipers began the shooting by firing from the roof.

Well-informed sources say armed opposition units seized the prefect's office in the city of Rustavi after a brief fight on Sunday. There have been no reports of casualties.

President Offers Referendum

AU0501174392 Paris AFP in English 1714 GMT
5 Jan 92

[Sophie Pons report]

[Text] Tbilisi, Jan 5 (AFP)—Beleaguered Georgian President Zviad Gamsakhurdia Sunday [5 January] offered to hold a referendum on opposition demands for his resignation as sporadic shooting continued in the capital. Speaking to Western journalists in the besieged parliament, where he has been holed up for two weeks against opposition forces wanting to oust him, Gamsakhurdia said however that these forces would not accept his offer.

"I'm ready, but they don't want that. They know they would be defeated, they want power by violence, they are not a democratic opposition," he said.

Gamsakhurdia has refused to resign despite a two-week onslaught by rebel national guardsmen, who claim to control 90 percent of Tbilisi and most of the rest of Georgia apart from the west of the Caucasus republic.

The opposition has accused Gamsakhurdia—a nationalist leader elected by a landslide last spring—of acting dictatorially, imprisoning his opponents and muzzling the press. The opposition said Sunday they had received a telegram from Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosyan offering his Georgian counterpart asylum in his republic.

Earlier spokesmen for the opposition, which has set up an interim ruling military council, said at least two people were wounded Saturday night when Gamsakhurdia supporters attacked the public prosecutor's office, a few hundred meters (yards) from the parliament building. On a hill overlooking parliament, the television tower controlled by the opposition for the past four days, also came under fire overnight. A radio station operated by Gamsakhurdia inside parliament went off the air Saturday.

Tengiz Sigua, appointed prime minister by the military council, was meanwhile forming a new cabinet which included many former government officials.

In an effort to rally the police, which has remained neutral throughout the fighting, Sigua has appointed Roman Gventadze, a popular former deputy interior minister, to head the ministry. The defence ministry has been handed to a career officer, General Levon Sharashenidze.

Meanwhile, long distance telephone lines, down since the conflict began, were reestablished Saturday, the ruling council said. The military council also said it had released the parliamentary speaker of south Ossetia, Toretz Kulumbegov, imprisoned a year ago by Georgian authorities on charges of inciting clashes in the ethnically troubled region.

In Tbilisi Sunday, about 2,000 people, many of them elderly, demonstrated in support of Gamsakhurdia outside the railway station. There were no incidents.

Four people had been killed and 34 injured when armed men dispersed a similar demonstration on Friday.

Attack Reportedly Resumed

LD0501232892 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 2100 GMT 5 Jan 92

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[Excerpts] [Announcer] Contrary to reports received during the day, the opposition in Tbilisi has resumed the storming of Government House. The building is on fire. The leaders of the Military Council have held their first news conference. They stated that their main aim is to overthrow dictatorship and set up a parliamentary republic in Georgia. According to incomplete data, the number of people killed in Tbilisi has reached 84, and over 300 have been wounded. Our correspondent Divar Dzharafarov left today for Tbilisi. Meanwhile, here are reports by Georgian journalists.

[Correspondent Z. Tsvali] Acting Defense Minister Sharashelidze said that the Soviet army units stationed in Georgia are not interfering in the events that are taking place and that they are exercising their right to immunity. He also said that if the honor and dignity of servicemen and members of their families are insulted the culprits will be subjected to severe punishment. [passage omitted]

[Announcer] Gamsakhurdia, however, still refuses to surrender to the opposition. According to a statement by Kitovani [member of the opposition Military Council], the president has control only over those who are staying with him in the besieged building. Nevertheless, Gamsakhurdia has proposed that his future be determined by an all-Georgian referendum.

Attack Denied

LD0501233492 Berlin ADN in German 2053 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Text] Moscow/Tbilisi (ADN)—The Georgian news agency IPRINDA this evening denied a report on Russian television that the opposition had begun its decisive storming of President Zviad Gamsakhurdia's Government House. "It is relatively quiet in the city. There has been no heavy armed conflict during the last few hours," said an employee of the Georgian agency in Tbilisi in response to a telephone inquiry from ADN.

Russian television had said in its main evening newscast that the opposition had commenced its decisive attack on the presidential office and had spoken of the possibility of many casualties.

President Said To Order Shootings

LD0601000892 Moscow POSTFACTUM in English 1912 GMT 5 Jan 92

[From the "Politics" section]

[Text] According to some sources about 1500 guards loyal to President Gamsakhurdia are in the Government House in Tbilisi, about fourth of them are armed. A PF [POSTFACTUM] correspondent got this information from one of the defenders of the Government House, who didn't want to disclose his name. According to the guard, President Gamsakhurdia issued an order to his guards which forbids them to leave the house. Those who disobey will be shot dead. The guard said that the greater part of the defenders are young people of about 18 or 19 years old and they do not want to participate in the warfare. According to the guard, only a small group of well trained and well-armed servicemen of the Special Task Unit (OMON) participate in the combat operations. He also said that all the guards loyal to Gamsakhurdia were provided with medicine to protect them from dysentery. The conditions in the Government House are anti-sanitary. The food provided is very bad. According to the guard, little children from a Kodzhorsk children's home are kept in the Government House. They are kept as hostages to protect the building from any attempted attacks or any attempts to blow up the building.

Council Holds News Conference

LD0601001492 Moscow POSTFACTUM in English 1912 GMT 5 Jan 92

[From the "Politics" section]

[Text] According to the commandant's office in Tbilisi, 4 captives were shot dead in the Government House on January 4, two more captives are being tortured.

The information was supplied at the press-conference given by members of the Military Council of Georgia on January 5. The media was also told that 4 Ukrainians were detained when leaving the Government House on January 4. It is supposed that the Ukrainians were snipers on the service of the Gamsakhurdia administration. It was also reported at the press-conference that the militia had taken Tbilisi under its control. It was important because, as it was maintained, groups of armed supporters of President Gamsakhurdia were riding in their cars all over Tbilisi opening unsystematic gun-fire. According to Tbilisi residents, militiamen were nowhere in sight in the city.

On January 5, at daytime, occasional shots were heard in downtown Tbilisi. Refugees from the central parts of the city were still seen. People were hurrying to move out their possessions. Large number of cars and armed people were seen outside the Georgian Academy of Sciences (situated in the vicinity of the Rustaveli avenue metro station), in which the opposition had set up its headquarters.

Only one kind of urban transport, metro, is not closed in Tbilisi. It is open from 6-30 till 22-00. All commercial shops are also closed. So are the greater part of clothing and general shops. Local television is under control of the opposition and is in the air. On January 4 supporters of President Gamsakhurdia made a failed attempt to destroy Tbilisi's television tower on the Mtatsminda mountain. They used grenade-launchers during their attack which failed. The television tower was not damaged. TV programs are not transmitted in western Georgia, because President Gamsakhurdia has many supporters there and the re-transmitting television tower in the city of Kutaisi is under control of local authorities.

Newspapers are not published in Tbilisi. The central publishing house, where all national and local newspapers are printed, is closed. So are the Sojuzpechat distribution network, post offices and telegraph. Eyewitnesses report that newspapers are still published in western Georgia, but they are under control of prefects loyal to President Gamsakhurdia.

Nika Cherkezishvili, chairman of Georgia's Journalists' Union, told a PF [POSTFACTUM] correspondent, that there exists a strong possibility that journalists and printing-house workers may be attacked by Gamsakhurdia's supporters if they try to publish a newspaper. Still, Cherkezishvili says, newspapers will begin to come out soon.

Shevardnadze Calls for Resignation

LD0601033392 Moscow Radio Rossii Network
in Russian 0200 GMT 6 Jan 92

[Text] Eduard Shevardnadze, former minister of external relations of the USSR, told the French television company TFI that, in his opinion, the resignation of President Gamsakhurdia is the sole solution for avoiding further bloodshed in Georgia.

The former minister noted that he is prepared to take part in settling the conflict and is ready to help the democratic movement in the republic. It will be difficult, but I am prepared to share the fate of my people, Eduard Shevardnadze stated.

He said that the number one problem is the search for national reconciliation.

Building Seized; President Flees

LD0601083192 Moscow Mayak Radio Network
in Russian 0813 GMT 6 Jan 92

[Text] Here is an urgent report from Tbilisi: Armed detachments of the Georgian opposition seized the Georgian government house this morning. A TASS correspondent learned this from a plenipotentiary representative of the command of the republic's National Guard.

The spokesman said President Zviad Gamsakhurdia, members of his family, the ministers closest to him, and some other members of the government were not found in the bunker under the building. It is thought they managed to leave the government house before the assault began and have fled in an unknown direction. A search is under way for them.

Nemo Burchuladze, deputy chairman of the republic's parliament, and a number of deputies who support the president have been detained, says a TASS report on the situation in Tbilisi.

President Said in Azerbaijan

LD0601093392 Hamburg DPA in German 0849 GMT
6 Jan 92

[Text] Moscow (DPA)—According to the RUSSIAN INFORMATION AGENCY (RIA), former Georgian President Zviad Gamsakhurdia, who was overthrown this morning, has crossed the border to Azerbaijan. Referring to a telephone report by the Azerbaijan People's Front, RIA reports that Gamsakhurdia crossed the border at 0920 hours [0620 GMT]. He traveled on toward Baku.

[Hamburg DPA in German at 0915 GMT on 6 January adds the following: "Georgian President Zviad Gamsakhurdia, who was overthrown this morning, has arrived in the town of Gandza in Azerbaijan. This was reported by the Azeri news agency TURAN. Gamsakhurdia was escorted by 12 vehicles. According to TURAN, nothing is known of his further plans."]

President's Escape Detailed

LD0601114892 Moscow Mayak Radio Network
in Russian 1040 GMT 6 Jan 92

[Text] We have just received a report from the POST-FACTUM agency. At about 0500 this morning President Zviad Gamsakhurdia and his entourage left Government House in Tbilisi; his whereabouts are not known at the moment.

Last night leaders of the armed opposition learned that Gamsakhurdia was planning to leave Government House. All roads leading to the building were sealed off and only one corridor was left open. The opposition feared that armed supporters of Gamsakhurdia would scatter throughout the city and begin terrorizing the population. According to representatives of the armed opposition who were guarding approaches to Government House, they deliberately allowed a convoy consisting of an APC, a minibus, and two Zhigulis to pass through. The representatives of the armed opposition believe Zviad Gamsakhurdia was a passenger in this convoy.

Some Ikarus buses which followed the convoy a little later stopped at the roadblock manned by the armed opposition not far from Leselidze Street. Gamsakhurdia supporters wearing flak jackets and helmets leapt out and opened fire. Six people were killed.

City Commandant Georgiy Karkarashvili announced that all roads leading out of Tbilisi had been blocked and that Gamsakhurdia was unlikely to escape. According to unconfirmed reports, there was a fierce exchange of fire in western Tbilisi, not far from (Murkhatberdan) cemetery, between retreating Gamsakhurdia supporters and representatives of the armed opposition.

The office of the principal adviser on national security to the president of Armenia has reported that a bus carrying President Zviad Gamsakhurdia and his entourage had crossed the Armenian border from Georgia. According to information received here as of 1100, a bus carrying President Gamsakhurdia left Armenia and, it is thought, entered Azerbaijan.

It has become known that Ashot Manucharyan, principal adviser on national security to the president of Armenia, held talks in Tbilisi on 2 January with Gamsakhurdia and with representatives of the armed opposition. It was agreed at these talks that President Gamsakhurdia would be allowed to flee Georgia via Armenia.

That was a report from the POSTFACTUM AGENCY.

[Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian at 1100 GMT on 6 January carries an update on the Gamsakhurdia situation. The announcer-read report states, in part:

["According to Georgia's representative in Moscow, Gamsakhurdia is being escorted by family members and 60 bodyguards. He is also carrying about 700 million

rubles, according to AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE, citing the Georgian representative. He also revealed that opposition leaders organized the pursuit of President Gamsakhurdia on Monday morning and helicopters have joined the operation. Armenian and Azerbaijani authorities have been informed that he may try to hide [skritsya] in the territory of these republics."]

Gamsakhurdia Said Arrested

AU0601122792 Paris AFP in English 1221 GMT
6 Jan 92

[Text] Tbilisi, Jan 6 (AFP)—Georgian President Zviad Gamsakhurdia was arrested in Azerbaijan and taken back to Tbilisi Monday [6 January], hours after fleeing under attack by armed opposition forces, an opposition spokesman said.

The spokesman for Tengiz Kitovani, one of the opposition leaders, said Gamsakhurdia was arrested in Kazakh and arrived back in Tbilisi early Monday afternoon. He had fled his besieged headquarters in the parliament building before dawn, leaving the city in opposition hands.

There was no immediate independent confirmation of the report.

Arrest Denied; Said Near Baku

LD0601144592 Moscow Radio Rossii Network
in Russian 1400 GMT 6 Jan 92

[Excerpt] AFP reports that the Azerbaijani authorities have arrested Georgian President Zviad Gamsakhurdia today and have returned him to Tbilisi. This happened several hours after Zviad Gamsakhurdia had managed to flee from Georgia. Representatives of the Azerbaijani Foreign Affairs Ministry have declared that the Republic government did not make an official proposal to Gamsakhurdia and did not promise to grant him political asylum.

That is what we have received. The staff of the IPRINDA agency has other information, however. They have just informed us by telephone that an IPRINDA correspondent met on 6 January with provisional Defense Minister Levan Sharashenidze, who denied that Gamsakhurdia has been arrested. The motor convoy escorting Gamsakhurdia is moving in the direction of Baku, and it is assumed that it is heading for the Northern Caucasus. [passage omitted]

'Peaceful Silence' in Tbilisi

LD0601143792 Moscow TASS International Service
in Russian 1419 GMT 6 Jan 92

[By Albert Kochetkov]

[Text] Tbilisi, Jan 6 (TASS)—A peaceful silence has descended upon the Georgian capital. Only rarely can gunfire be heard in the area around Government House,

where the remaining resistance by Zviad Gamsakhurdia's armed units is being suppressed. Sappers have started minesweeping operations in the presidential residence. According to preliminary reports, dozens of decaying corpses—Gamsakhurdia supporters killed during the 15-day battle in central Tbilisi—have been discovered in one of its rooms. The fire that broke out in Government House this morning is now dying down.

Helicopter Sent To Find President

*OW0601151392 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1443 GMT 6 Jan 92*

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] According to unconfirmed information supplied to INTERFAX by Georgian Television, a helicopter with Georgian national guards flew out from Tbilisi towards the Azerbaijani city of Ganja. They are to establish the whereabouts of President Gamsakhurdia who fled from Tbilisi with his family on Monday morning. Mr. Gamsakhurdia is reported to have been accompanied by 60 armed guards.

According to the Azerbaijani side, Mr. Gamsakhurdia is in Ganja.

Extradition Possible

*LD0601171992 Moscow TASS in English
1634 GMT 6 Jan 92*

[By Albert Kochetkov]

[Text] Tbilisi January 6 TASS—Opposition forces deliberately left unblocked one of the exits from the House of Government through which Zviad Gamsakhurdia and his supporters fled last night, Dzhaba Ioseliani, a leader of the military council, formed by the opposition forces, said at a news conference here today.

He said opposition forces did not plan to storm the House of Government where the president's supporters defended for 15 days, because this move could cause numerous casualties. As a result, Gamsakhurdia and his loyalists managed to fight their way to the embankment of the Kura River in several cars and three buses escorted by two armoured vehicles.

According to Ioseliani, Gamsakhurdia is now outside Georgia—in the location where its borders with Armenia and Azerbaijan converge. Part of the people who broke through with him was taken prisoner. Among them are deputies of parliament.

Asked by TASS about the fate of Gamsakhurdia, Ioseliani said if the president was granted political asylum in another country, Georgia would press for his extradition to bring him to court on charges of the criminal activity against his own people.

Speakers at the news conference said more than 40 hostages were saved in the House of Government.

Among them there were many ordinary people who did not belong to opposition parties or movements. Hostages said they were subjected to sophisticated torture—from ruthless beatings to receiving electric shocks and suspension by the handcuffs.

Ioseliani noted the military council would disband once a new parliament was elected. He said a political consultative council was now formed. It involved many parties and movements of Georgia. The council is launching preparations for elections which are scheduled to be held this spring.

Ioseliani did not rule out that Eduard Shevardnadze may take part in expediting democratic processes in Georgia, pointing out the rich experience and authority of the former Union minister and leader of the republic.

Political Situation Stabilizes in South Ossetia

Council Appeals for Calm

*LD0401134192 Moscow TASS International Service
in Russian 1231 GMT 4 Jan 92*

[By Albert Kochetkov]

[Text] Tbilisi, 4 Jan (TASS)—The military council of the Georgian opposition forces has sent an appeal to the opposing sides of South Ossetia, calling upon them to cease fire and to start talks on the elimination of this fratricidal conflict between the Georgians and Ossetians, who have lived together in peace and concord for centuries. The military commandant of the opposition forces in Tbilisi has ordered the reinforcement of passport control in the republican capital as of 4 January. All those registered elsewhere and guests of Tbilisi were asked to register and to receive temporary permits.

An IMA-PRESS correspondent reports, via the "Druzhba" radio club on the frequencies of the Russian Amateur Radio Emergency Service, that people living in the Georgian capital who decide to go into the streets prefer to walk. Unknown armed persons stop cars and remove gasoline and sometimes even take the vehicles. Robberies have become more frequent in the city.

Georgian President Zviad Gamsakhurdia has ordered the prefects of the republic's towns and rayons to complete the universal mobilization of his supporters by Christmas, 7 January. Citizens between the age of 20 and 45 are subject to mobilization. Prefects must provide transportation for them and wait for a signal from the seat of government.

'Fragile Lull' Holds

*LD0401150492 Moscow TASS in English 1419 GMT
4 Jan 92*

[By Valeriy Shanayev]

[Text] Vladikavkaz January 4 TASS—A tendency towards stabilisation of the political situation in South

Ossetia has become apparent. According to reports of the information committee, only individual shots were heard last night in the distant approaches of Tskhinval and Znauri districts, the most critical points. The weapon emplacements of the militants continue to be the same outlying villages of Nikozi, Prisi, Tamrasheni, Kekhvi and Eredvi. Ossetian self-defence detachments replied by firing on Georgian military positions. There were no reports of casualties.

According to observers the fragile lull and cessation of massive rocket and artillery fire on populated points in South Ossetia was due to following reasons: a section of armed supporters of the Georgian president and military equipment has been moved from Tskhinval to Tbilisi. In addition to that, imposition of emergency on the whole territory of the region and formation of armed forces have served as a restraining factor in further escalation of armed confrontation between the Georgian and the Ossetian sides.

The situation in South Ossetia continues to be tense. Quite a number of armed militants are concentrated around Tskhinval. The city continues to be in a tight grip of economic, transport, power and information blockade. Supply of electricity, fuel gas, water and heat to residential areas is intermittent. All roads by which supplies of bread, medicines and essential goods used to reach Tskhinval from North Ossetia are cut off.

Units of the Interior armed forces and the Ossetian Guards have not succeeded so far in regulating columns of vehicles on the main Djava-Tskhinval tract, because the highway is controlled by the Georgian side at many places and is being fired at by the militants. Another detachment of the self-defence forces consisting of South Ossetian civilians left today Vladikavkaz for Tskhinval by Transcaucasian motor highway.

In accordance with the decision of the Supreme Soviet of the South Ossetian republic general mobilization of civilian population of 18 to 60 years age group has been announced, a self-defence committee and other defence organizations have also been formed. These detachments will help Ossetian guards defend the outskirts of Tskhinval from the militants, maintain order and check all kinds of vehicles. In all, ten such mobile units are to be formed.

Situation Still Stable

LD0501161392 Moscow TASS International Service
in Russian 1021 GMT 5 Jan 92

[By Valeriy Shanayev]

[Text] Vladikavkaz, 5 Jan (TASS)—It was relatively calm overnight in South Ossetia. According to the Information Committee's press center, there was no firing to be heard even in the worst crisis spots: on the distant approaches to Tskhinval and in the Znauri region.

In the opinion of Rezo Khugayev, deputy chairman of the South Ossetian Supreme Soviet, the lull is connected with the fact that some of the fighters, equipment, and weapons have been redeployed from the outskirts of Tskhinval to Tbilisi. The declaration by the South Ossetian Parliament of a state of emergency throughout the republic's territory and the general mobilization of citizens between the ages of 18 and 60 have also been stabilizing factors.

However, the situation in South Ossetia remains tense, since there are still large-scale forces of fighters in the Georgian villages around Tskhinval. They are maintaining a tight blockade around the town.

Calm Linked To Tbilisi Events

LD0601105792 Moscow Radio Rossii Network
in Russian 1000 GMT 6 Jan 92

[Text] The South Ossetian sociopolitical situation is gradually becoming more stable and controllable. The information committee press center says that no shots can be heard in the region's crisis zones for the second day running. The firing points of Georgian paramilitaries in nearby villages are quiet; Ossetian self-defence detachments have not been using weapons, either. Observers feel that the lull in South Ossetia is mainly connected with events in Tbilisi.

Gassiyev on Implications

PM0601142192 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian
6 Jan 92 p 2

[Georgiy Ovcharenko report under the "From Hot Spots" rubric: "The Pain of Tskhinval... No One Wants To Share It As Yet"]

[Text] Tskhinval-Moscow—The fact that I flew to Tskhinval in the evening from Tbilisi was no mere coincidence: Events there today outside Government House have a direct bearing on the future of unfortunate South Ossetia. This is now the third year that its small people have been fighting for their dignity and independence, losing the best of their sons.

There have, of course, been varying elements in this fight for survival: unconstitutional decisions, political intrigue, and some what I would call overemotionalism. But I also know something else: It was not South Ossetia that began this conflict, and each step it takes, albeit not always legal, has been in opposition to Gamsakhurdia's government, which is trying with obsessive stubbornness to oust the Ossetians at any cost from their rich mountains and lands where their forebears have lived for generations.

Today Zviad Gamsakhurdia is himself under siege. What lies in store for South Ossetia if the opposition wins the bloody fight for power? I put this question to Tengiz Sigua before flying to Tskhinval.

"There is anarchy on both sides [vzaimnyy bespredel] in South Ossetia today, people are dying senselessly," Tengiz Ippolitovich said. "We will end the fatal war and come to the negotiating table."

I put virtually the same question to Znaur Nikolayevich Gassiyev, the leader of the South Ossetian republic (which has as yet gone unrecognized by anyone):

[Ovcharenko] How will the outcome of the battle in Tbilisi affect the South Ossetians?

[Gassiyev] If that demon Gamsakhurdia wins, our people will have to fight to the end if Russia does not recognize us. And perish. Because we will not leave our lands and Gamsakhurdia will not allow us to remain there.

[Ovcharenko] What do you expect if the opposition wins?

[Gassiyev] I think that the war against us will stop. [Gassiyev ends] Znaur Gassiyev lit up another cigarette.

[Gassiyev] I think that it will be suggested that we revert to the former situation—to an autonomous oblast within Georgia. But our people are no longer what they were before and they will not agree to that.

[Ovcharenko] Why?

[Gassiyev] First, we simply cannot be second-class people, which is what Georgia's Government House considers us to be. Second, too much blood has been shed. For what? For us to return to the past? The main thing is that we do not believe the leaders of the current opposition and Tengiz Sigua himself to be truly democratic.

[Ovcharenko] Are there grounds for that?

[Gassiyev] When the earthquake occurred, Sigua was prime minister. He didn't provide a kopek or a brick to

restore Dzhava and Ossetia's villages, despite his promises. He didn't even visit Dzhava once—he only looked at its ruins from a helicopter. Yet Georgia's villages have been virtually rebuilt. So we expect nothing good for ourselves from the so-called legitimate president of Georgia or from his opposition.

[Ovcharenko] But may this opposition not last forever? And one more point: Do you realize the public reaction if South Ossetia rejects talks with Georgia?

[Gassiyev] Yes, we have considered that scenario. Initially political deadlock awaits us. Today public opinion supports us, since South Ossetia is the object of aggression. If we reject talks and insist on seceding from Georgia, we may give the impression that we are to blame for the conflict's continuing. But that is not the case: We have simply worked out how events will develop in the future and we see that there is no good in it for the population of the South Ossetian republic within Georgia. That is why our Supreme Soviet has raised the question of reuniting with Russia.

[Ovcharenko] As far as I am aware, Russia is in no rush to embrace South Ossetia. What is more, you would agree that there are plenty of constitutional and legal obstacles here...

[Gassiyev] Yes. But the USSR has collapsed, it no longer exists. Why then should its laws and constitution be in force? Yet we were part of Russia from 1774 and we have never renounced it. And another point: It was Russia that rescued us from the 1921 genocide. Will it really not rescue us from this genocide? Incidentally, it is not only we who need Russia, but Russia also needs South Ossetia for strategic, economic, ecological, and other reasons... [Gassiyev ends]

The next morning I drove through Tskhinval. Many homes bore the traces of severe bombardment.

...So who will share the pain of Tskhinval? And how much pain should we expect?

Estonia

Savisaar Pays Unofficial Visit to Germany

OW0301184692 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1723 GMT 3 Jan 92

[From "Diplomatic Panorama"; transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Estonia's Prime Minister Edgar Savisaar is paying an unofficial visit to Germany. BALTFAX quotes sources in the Estonian government as saying that Mr. Savisaar is to stay there until January for talks with Bavarian government officials and entrepreneurs.

Money Remittances Banned Due to Cash Shortage

OW0301172992 Moscow BALTFAX in English
1623 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Estonian government has banned sending and receiving money remittances by republican citizens starting January 15, 1992. The reason is the shortage of cash. BF's [BALTFAX] correspondent reports from Tallinn.

The total sum of remittances sent to Estonia over the past eleven months is 30 million rubles more than the sum sent out of the republic. Previously, the gap was covered by the USSR State Bank. However, after Estonia proclaimed its independence, such practice stopped.

Newspapers Publish Draft Constitution

PM0601105792 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian
27 Dec 91 Union Edition p 2

[Leonid Levitskiy report under the "Direct Line" rubric: "Draft Constitution Published"]

[Text] Tallinn—Local newspapers have published Estonia's new draft constitution.

The constitution will be adopted by nationwide vote next year and will replace the 1938 Constitution. Estonia is proclaimed an autonomous, independent state. Its territory is an indivisible whole. The state language is Estonian. Estonian citizenship will be acquired by birth or by a subsequent juridical act. The draft guarantees the right to preserve national allegiance and guarantees national minorities the right to create cultural autonomies. In regions where a non-Estonian population predominates the local organs of power may conduct their affairs in the language of the national minority.

Government Raises Fuel Prices 1 Jan

OW0301201892 Moscow BALTFAX in English
1623 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] BF's [BALTFAX] correspondent reports from Tallinn that on January 1, 1992, Estonia raised prices on fuel. A liter of A-76 gasoline costs now 2.85 rubles. AI-93—5.77 rubles, diesel fuel—2 rubles.

Gasoline is still not sold to private car owners. Even emergency transport does not receive enough fuel.

"The fuel headquarters" at the Tallinn city board decided that if the Estonian capital does not receive additional amount of diesel fuel within a few days, all bus routes coinciding with railroad and electric transport's routes will be abolished.

Prime Minister Warns About Unemployment

LD0501020192 Moscow TASS in English 1815 GMT
4 Jan 92

[By TASS correspondent Albert Maloveryan]

[Text] Tallinn January 4 TASS—The unemployment may grow in Estonia in 1992, Estonian Prime Minister Edgar Savisaar said on Saturday [4 January].

In his weekly radio address, Savisaar urged accelerated economic reforms in the republic to solve the problem.

The Estonian Government has also taken several unpopular measures to speed up the reform, drawing fire from the left and the right.

"That was the only choice. The task to move from the command economy to civilised market relations requires responsible and sometimes painful measures," the prime minister said.

The Estonian Government hopes that small businesses, joint stock societies and cooperatives will facilitate the reform, because they are very flexible and can promptly react to the changes in supply and demand, Savisaar said.

Decline in Agricultural Production Noted

OW0501030892 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1953 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Agricultural production growth in Estonia has remained extremely low, the Estonia newspaper reports. During 11 months of 1991 the republic produced 124 litres of milk per capita less than in the same period of 1990. This means that price increases will not be able to save Estonia from food shortages, the newspaper believes.

200,000 ID Insets Arrive From Finland

OW0501034992 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1953 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] 200,000 Finland-printed insets to IDs of the Estonian citizen have been brought to Tallinn, the IDs

themselves, paid for by Estonian emigrants, are being printed in Canada. The insets which are to be handed out together with IDs will contain additional information on the bearer. By now, over 100,000 IDs of Estonian citizens have already been handed out.

Latvia

Envoy to UN Comments on Troop Withdrawal

OW0401094492 Moscow BALTFAX in English
1920 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Mr Aivars Baumanis, the permanent representative of Latvia at the UN, said at a press conference in New York that his main political task now is to solve the problem of the former Soviet troops pullout from the Baltics. He said that representatives of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in the UN are "in good agreement" on the subject. Mr Baumanis said also that in the recent time he signed documents on the re-establishment of diplomatic relations with Jamaica, Cyprus, Cuba, Malta and the Philippines.

Janis Peters Named Ambassador to Russia

PM0501221392 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA
in Russian 26 Dec 91 First Edition p 1

[Untitled TASS-RIA report under "News in Brief" rubric]

[Text] The well-known Latvian man of letters Janis Peters, who for the last two years has occupied the post of permanent representative of the Latvian Council of Ministers in Moscow, has been appointed the Latvian Republic's extraordinary and plenipotentiary ambassador to Russia.

Defense Minister Continues To Form Team

PM0601105592 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA
in Russian 31 Dec 91 First Edition p 3

[Colonel M. Ziyeminsh report under "Direct Line" rubric: "Who Is in Defense Minister's Team"]

[Text] Riga, 30 Dec—Latvian Defense Minister Talavs Jundzis is continuing to form his first working team. The people who are fated to be the minister's inner circle—that is, his deputies—are of greatest interest to the public. As announced earlier, there will be two of them: one with experience of service in the ranks of the USSR Armed Forces, and the other with knowledge and practical experience of NATO military structures. Suitable candidates have apparently been selected. An as yet unnamed reserve colonel living in the city of Valmiera will represent Soviet military experience in the defense minister's circle, while the candidate for the second deputy was selected by Andrejs Krastins, deputy

chairman of the republic Supreme Council, during his recent tour of the United States.

He has also not yet been named. But it is already known that he is a U.S. Army reserve officer with great theoretical and practical experience of airborne troops activities. He is an American of Latvian descent. According to Krastins, among other things his duties will include coordinating the Latvian self-defense forces' activities with NATO structures.

Privatization Efforts Experience Problems

LD0601011992 Moscow TASS in English
2042 GMT 5 Jan 92

[By TASS correspondent Galina Kuchira]

[Text] Riga January 5 TASS—No deals were closed last Saturday [4 January] at the auction, organized for the purpose of the privatization of production facilities. A commission, which was to make a list of production facilities due to be privatized, was not created.

Auctions can be held in Latvia only on days off. The government issued an instruction to this effect three months ago. Along with the instruction, it issued the regulations under which everyone has a chance to become the owner of a dressmaker's shop, a small grocery store, a repair shop, or a sauna. But there is no commotion in the auction hall.

City authorities found themselves in a difficult situation. They are afraid to make any decision on selling those premises, because their former owners or their heirs may claim them. It has been allowed to pre-war owners of the buildings to send applications for the restoration of their property rights during the period that ends on October 30, 1994. According to the executive committee of the city council, some 16,000 applications of this kind may be expected. So, it is not clear what premises the city authorities can put up for sale at the auction.

Small second-hand shops often appear these days in some non-descript basements. But this happens silently, without any publicity, with documents arranged in much haste. Serious businessmen will hardly invest their money in the purchasing and equipment of the premises, if their former owners may turn up.

There are rich people and firms, which can build shops with their own money. But they will not be given a plot of land for that, because the executive committee should wait for its possible owners to appear.

There is a lot of discussion of privatization problems in Latvia, but no perceptible progress has been achieved, including in industry. The only problem facing industrial enterprises is how to survive, because they are short of raw materials and accessories. Some factories have already stopped working, others are still functioning, but their reserves are too small for them to hold out for long.

This is why their transformation into joint-stock companies is hardly probable. It will not be easy to bring down the current prices without the creation of a viable class of producers of goods and services.

Finance Ministry Prepares No Deficit Budget

OW0401090892 Moscow BALTFAX in English
1920 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] A new "deficitless" draft budget for the first half of 1992 has been prepared in Latvia. The first draft budget was known to envisage a 1 bn [billion] ruble deficit. Latvian deputy finance minister Yuriy Dupchenek told BF [BALTFAX] the government managed to balance the budget by increasing the sales tax to 10% and revenues from the excise tax. [sentence as received] He said also that budget expenditure and revenues would increase as compared with 1991 due to inflation.

Mr Valdis Freidenfelds, the press-attache of the Latvian finance ministry, told BF the agriculture ministry will be earmarked 606 m [million] rubles in the budget, the welfare ministry—531 m rubles, the health ministry—425 m rubles, the education ministry—387 m rubles, the culture ministry—132 m rubles, the internal ministry 240 m rubles and the defense ministry—175.7 m rubles.

Minister on Currency, Privatization Plans

OW0401090992 Moscow BALTFAX in English
1920 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The national currency of Latvia—the lat—will not be introduced until the end of 1992, state minister Janis Dinevics said at a press-conference in Riga. He conceded that the Latvian government has been justly criticized for "the lack of privatisation measures in the republic". Mr Dinevics said the Latvian government passed a resolution on January 2 obliging all ministers to prepare privatisation schedules for enterprises subordinated to them by February 15.

Radio Programming Changes, Development Planned

LD0501034992 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian
1000 GMT 28 Dec 91

[Interview with Latvian radio official Daina Ostrovska by unidentified reporter; place and date not given—recorded; all times as heard]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] I would like to note that this year the number of so-called Russian-speaking listeners has noticeably increased. This is on account of the second program of Latvian Radio. However, I want to say with satisfaction that this second program and in part also the first program began to compete during this year with the

popular radio channel in our republic among the Russian-speaking people, the Mayak radio channel. I think the interest in events and processes here in Latvia by people who want to connect and do connect their lives and the future with Latvia shows that this is an essential channel for information. It also means that there is some appreciation of the work of our radio workers, radio journalists, and the entire radio collective.

[Reporter] Each new year brings something new. What changes will 1992 bring to the radio program?

[Ostrovska] Our intentions exceed our realistic possibilities. Nevertheless, what will specifically change next year in Latvian radio programs? First, the audibility of Latvian Radio's second program will change. [passage omitted] Beginning next year we will discontinue relays of the All-Union Radio first program [Programma Radio Odin] and Mayak program. There are various reasons. One of the reasons is that it is another country's transmitter and we have to pay for it. We are interested in the development of national radios. There will thus be strategic changes in programs. On those wavelengths on which the All-Union Radio first program was heard, in the future Russian radio programming will be heard on ultrashortwave.

On the Mayak program wavelengths, which were also heard on ultrashortwave, these transmitters will be added to our radio, for the time being to the second program.

Our intentions—and I think that this is a question of a few months—are to form a third program of Latvian Radio. For the time being there is a realistic opportunity for this program to be heard from 1800. Each weekday evening from 1800 there will be three programs on Latvian Radio.

Perhaps I should mention briefly what will be in each of the programs. The first program, in principle, will remain similar to what it is now. I am not talking about specific changes, a specific broadcast, or contents. I think that this can be read by our observant listeners in RIGAS VILNI [Riga Waves—program's newspaper]. They will learn by following our programs as a whole.

Latvian Radio First Program will remain, in principle, the same. Latvian Radio's second program will remain the same until 1900. When it is possible for this third program to be on the air, then from 1900, Latvian Radio's second program will be original. [passage omitted]

Lithuania

Landsbergis Leaves for Belarussian Visit

LD0301132592 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network
in Lithuanian 1000 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Text] Lithuanian Supreme Council Chairman Vytautas Landsbergis left today for a brief working visit in Belorussia. He will meet Belorussian Supreme Soviet

Chairman Stanislav Shushkevich. The visit's aim is to discuss bilateral interstate issues due to the formation of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Deputy on Commonwealth Stance

OW0301184392 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1723 GMT 3 Jan 92

[From "Diplomatic Panorama"; transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Vytautas Landsbergis, head of the Lithuanian Supreme Council, has arrived in Minsk for a two-day visit during which he is planning to discuss the promotion of bilateral relations with Belarus as a member of the Commonwealth of Independent States [CIS].

Mr. Landsbergis's deputy, Kazimieras Motieka, believes, for his part, that the Commonwealth will not last long and that Lithuania will have to deal with "absolutely independent states" in the future. In his interview with BALTFAX Mr. Motieka welcomed the changes taking place within the ex-Soviet Union, but noted that Lithuania would continue to find itself threatened "as long as Soviet troops are present on Lithuanian territory."

Landsbergis Returns Home

LD0601062892 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network
in Lithuanian 0800 GMT 5 Jan 92

[Text] A work meeting between Belarussian Supreme Council Chairman Stanislav Shushkevich and Lithuanian Supreme Council Chairman Vytautas Landsbergis was held during a two-day period at Bialovez'skaya Pushcha.

Question: If the states' bilateral relations were discussed, a decision on how to further expand economic cooperation and direct ties between Belarussian and Lithuanian enterprises, organizations, and institutions were of utmost importance during the negotiations.

The meeting, the contents of which are confidential, concluded with the signing of a communique.

Late last night Vytautas Landsbergis returned to Vilnius.

News Conference on Talks

LD0601125492 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network
in Lithuanian 1000 GMT 6 Jan 92

[Report by correspondent Vitas Usas on a news conference by Lithuanian Supreme Council Chairman Vytautas Landsbergis with unidentified correspondents at the Lithuanian Supreme Council building in Vilnius on 6 January]

[Text] Supreme Council Chairman Vytautas Landsbergis today answered correspondents' questions on this week's meetings with Belarussian Supreme Council Chairman Stanislav Shushkevich and on yesterday's Baltic Council meeting in Jurmala. On the first meeting,

Vytautas Landsbergis said that no exceptional problems currently exist with Belarus. Interstate treaties on political relations and trade have already been prepared and must be signed as soon as possible. There was a desire in Belarus to acquaint us with the formation of the Commonwealth of Independent States, Vytautas Landsbergis noted. He also denied reports disseminated by certain foreign media sources that Ukraine, Belarus, and the Baltic states plan to form some sort of commonwealth.

Landsbergis on Belarussian, Polish Ties

LD0601045792 Moscow TASS International Service
in Russian 2304 GMT 5 Jan 92

[By TASS correspondent Kazis Ustisila]

[Text] Vilnius, 6 Jan (TASS)—Lithuania's relations with Belarus are very good and are developing in a favorable way," stated Vytautas Landsbergis, chairman of the Supreme Council of the Lithuanian Republic, in the "State Leader's Standpoint" television program relayed by Lithuanian television late Sunday [6 January] evening.

The head of the Lithuanian parliament devoted his speech almost entirely to summing up the results of his unofficial working visit to Belarus on 3-4 January. He said that preparatory work has been all but completed and that two interstate Lithuanian-Belarussian treaties will be signed in the immediate future on trade and economic ties and on the principles of interstate relations. The second treaty, in Landsbergis's words, "develops and strengthens the principles of the declaration signed in October last year."

Vytautas Landsbergis reported that work has been begun on clarifying and marking out the Lithuanian-Belarussian state border. In addition, much attention was paid at meetings held during the visit with Stanislav Shushkevich, chairman of the Supreme Council of Belarus, to the problems of ethnic minorities. As the head of the Lithuanian parliament said, an accord was reached that "there should be no obstacles whatsoever to the opening of Lithuanian schools in Belarus and Belarussian schools in Lithuania." He stressed that a general view has been worked out on "the inexpediency and unacceptability of the establishment of territorial autonomies."

Vytautas Landsbergis said that an accord has been reached to continue such meetings in the future, assessing them as "useful and necessary."

The head of the Lithuanian parliament only touched in passing on relations with Lithuania's southern neighbor, Poland. He said that this country "is still procrastinating over the signing of certain interstate documents."

Road Freightage Agreement Signed With Poland

OW0301172492 Moscow BALTFAX in English
1623 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Lithuanian Means of Communication Ministry and the Polish Transport Ministry signed a temporary agreement on international road freightage. The agreement will be in effect in the first quarter of 1992 until a bilateral treaty is signed.

Every freight means of transport bound for Lithuania or Poland should have a special pass. Passes are not necessary only for transports carrying cargos for fairs, exhibitions, concerts, shows, sports competitions, as well as carrying coffins, or transports which had a road accident. Lithuania and Poland guarantee free transit through their territories. Until a bilateral treaty is signed, traffic tax will not be collected. Passenger transportation will be carried out after preliminary coordination.

The two sides agreed that Lithuanian and Polish experts will immediately begin preparing a bilateral agreement on transportation.

Polish Parliamentarian Stages Hunger Strike

PM0601115892 Katowice TRYBUNA SLASKA
in Polish 30 Dec 91 p 2

[Report by TRYBUNA SLASKA Vilnius correspondent Jerzy Surwilo: "The Rejtan of Vilnius"]

[Text] At the 18 December session of Lithuanian parliament Deputy Ryszard Maciejkaniec, delegate to the Lithuanian Republic Supreme Council and chairman of the Polish parliamentary group, issued an announcement stating that his constituents demanded that government plenipotentiaries be recalled from their posts in the Vilnius and Soleczniki [Salcininkai] districts and a fresh election to new self-government councils in the Wilenszczyzna area [prewar term for Lithuanian territory within Polish Republic] be held not later than the first half of March 1992. In addition, Deputy Maciejkaniec reported that his constituents demanded a reversal of the government decision to place parts of the territories in the Vilnius and Troki [Trakai] districts under the capital's administration. To express his solidarity with his constituents' demands, at midday on 18 December Deputy Ryszard Maciejkaniec began a hunger strike at his office in the Parliament building.

Maciejkaniec told a KURIER WILENSKI correspondent that his decision to go on hunger strike was meant as a protest not only against the deliberate official delay in announcing an election in Wilenszczyzna but also against the unwarranted parceling out of its territories, including the parish of Czarny Bor [Juodsiliai], which he represented in parliament.

The Main Board of the Union of Poles in Lithuania has expressed its recognition of and support for Ryszard Maciejkaniec's action, stating that his protest was

directed against the violation of democracy and human rights with regard to the Polish population of Lithuania.

The latest reports state that Maciejkaniec has temporarily suspended his hunger strike while at the same time expressing the hope that after the reopening of the current parliamentary session—scheduled for 12 January 1992—Supreme Council deputies will demonstrate a sympathetic understanding of his constituents' requests.

Landsbergis on Criticism From Social Democrats

OW0501034592 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1953 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Mr. Vytautas Landsbergis, the chairman of the Lithuanian parliament, has described criticism directed against him by the social-Democratic Party of Lithuania as "unconstructive". The Council of the party is known to have passed a statement criticizing Mr. Landsbergis' activity and calling on the chief of parliament "to reconsider his positions".

Mr. Landsbergis, speaking on the Lithuanian Radio, stressed he "would like to hear serious criticism against him" which the above-mentioned statement failed to produce.

Small Arms Sales Allowed for Self-Defense

OW0301172192 Moscow BALTFAX in English
1623 GMT 3 Jan 92

[Transmitted via KYODC]

[Text] The newspaper "LIETUVOS AYDAS" published January 3 a resolution of the Lithuanian government allowing the republican citizens and permanent residents to buy and keep smooth-bore shotguns for self-defense purposes.

The resolution adopted on December 24, 1991, allows state and private shops to sell shotguns, gas pistols (revolvers) and cylinders if they have the licence of the Interior Ministry.

Commissar Explains Regulations

LD0501064192 Vilnius Radio Vilnius International
Service in Lithuanian 2200 GMT 4 Jan 92

[Text] The order approved by the Lithuanian minister of internal affairs on permission for the population to obtain and possess weapons took effect on 3 January.

Vytautas Navickas, senior commissar of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, explained to RESPUBLIKA that those who wish to obtain a weapon from 3 January on will

I have to contact the local police commissariat. After having established that the individual is not a mental patient, has not been registered on the drug list, and following an interview with members of his family, he will be issued a permit to obtain and keep a weapon.

Weapons can only be used in urgent self-defense or instances of dire.

According to a government decree issued at the end of last year, individuals are permitted to obtain and possess hunting rifles, ammunition, gas [word indistinct], and gas spray cylinders. Gas [word indistinct] can be obtained by any individual who presents a passport, while a firearm can only be obtained by individuals who have a permit from the police.

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